DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 692 FL 026 916

AUTHOR	Lo Bianco, Joseph, Ed.
TITLE	A Description and Exploratory Evaluation of Program Types in Indigenous and Community Languages. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Language Australia, Melbourne (Victoria).
SPONS AGENCY	Australian Dept. of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.
ISBN	ISBN-1-876768-23-1
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	244p.; Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training, and Youth Affairs under the "Quality Outcomes Programme."
AVAILABLE FROM	Publications and Clearinghouse Manager, Language Australia, GPO Box 372F, Melbourne, VIC 3001, Australia. Tel: 613-9612-2600.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - General (020) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC10 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Bilingual Education Programs; Community Programs; Cultural Background; Cultural Differences; Foreign Countries; *Heritage Education; Language Attitudes; *Language Maintenance; Language Planning; *National Programs; Official Languages; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Uncommonly Taught Languages
IDENTIFIERS	*Australia; Native Language

ABSTRACT

The approaches to language maintenance in Australia are diverse and heterogeneous and include at least three kinds of programs: bilingual education programs; ethnic school programs (after hours or weekend programs that are controlled and managed by the community concerned); and mainstream school programs where the indigenous native language is being taught as a school subject as part of the normal school curriculum. This report is divided into three parts. Part A discusses the salient themes of language education common to all students. Part B consists of a series of site reports on language education in different parts of Australia, including language maintenance via community controlled schooling (the case of Arabic in New South Wales); language maintenance via mainstream schooling (the cases of Khmer in Western Australia and Chinese and Italian in Victoria); and language maintenance via revitalization and revival (the cases of Noongar and Yindjibarndi, also in Western Australia). Part C is a cost benefit analysis of the various programs. Part D is a resource kit for establishing community language programs, with numerous organizational and individual points of contact. (Contains 51 references.) (KFT)

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Final Report

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A Description and Exploratory Evaluation of Program Types in Indigenous and Community Languages

Final Report

Language Australia Limited
The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia
2000

Funded by the
Commonwealth Government
under the Quality Outcomes Programme of the
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ISBN 1 876768 23 1

This project was funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs under the 'Quality Outcomes Programme'.

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The assistance of Amalia Milman, Dianne Dean, Chantal Crozet and Catherine Doherty is gratefully acknowledged.

INTRODUCTION

Double Power

'... becoming an educated, literate person in and across two cultures ...'

Mandaway Yunupingu

The approaches to language maintenance in Australia are diverse and heterogeneous. They include at least the following kinds of programs:

- Bilingual education programs. These are defined as school programs where a proportion of the school curriculum is presented in the non-English home language of the students.
- "Ethnic" school programs. These include after hours or weekend programs that are controlled and managed by the community concerned, and tend to operate outside the formal public education system.
- Certain types of mainstream school program, particularly those where the indigenous or community language is taught as a school subject as part of the normal school curriculum.

These programs can be seen to represent key points along a continuum. One extreme point of the continuum describes a context involving the resuscitation and revitalisation of the language. In this case the target group of learners are *not* speakers of the language though they usually identify with it. Invariably there are attempts to revive the language that may go beyond the school program but in which the school's program will be a central feature.

The other extreme describes a context where the language is actively used by the learners and is a major or prominent language in the world or within large communities in Australia.

There are intermediate programs as well in which the learner, language setting, program type variables make up various configurations of difference that locate the context between the two extremes.

Consistency of approach and common and salient themes across all schools and programs in this project have been identified. These are reported in Part A below in a common style and with common content.

It will become apparent in reading the reports (Part B below) that these programs are 'sites' where very complex patterns of interaction of variables take place. Culture, national histories and attitudes, gender relations, inter-ethnic relations, religion, educational aspiration, departmental guidelines and expectations, as well as language teaching and learning practices mix in unique combinations. For this reason the reports of the sites differ in style as well as content from each other.

The classification of language programs and the attribution to these of common characteristics necessarily involves abstracting from the detail and complexity of a setting. This process of abstracting is valuable since it can reveal broad commonalities that exist under the otherwise disparate surface of the programs and the experiences they encapsulate. Part A reflects this.

Nevertheless it needs to be kept in mind that such aggregation would reduce the programs to a superficial similarity if it were taken too far. Part B therefore retains a great deal of the 'flavour' and context of the single cases.

In keeping with the Services Contract between the Commonwealth of Australia and Language Australia Limited dated 9 April 1998 (a variation to the contract was signed on 7 July 1998) this report addresses the following areas:

- Introduction/Appraisal of methodology
- PART A: Salient themes common to all studies
- PART B: Site reports
  Arabic in NSW
  Khmer in Western Australia
  Italian and Chinese in Victoria
  Noongar, Yindjibarndi in Western Australia
- PART C: Cost benefit analysis
- PART D: Resource Kit

The substantive component of this report addresses three objectives as set out in Schedule One of the contract:

- Objective One: Key contextual variables for each language and each program type.
- Objective Two: Establishment of salient themes which arise in the context of each program.
- Objective Three: Evaluate achievements (linguistic, sociocultural, attitudinal) for each context).

The sections that follow address these three objectives in both Part A and Part B of the report. The contextual variables and the salient themes are, however, brought together in Part A. Consequently Objectives One and Two are dealt with in Part A explicitly and in Part B indirectly, whereas Objective Three is discussed throughout Part B.

Objective 4 (comparative cost benefit analysis of each model) is addressed in Part C. Objective 5 (development, publication and distribution of a resource kit) is an adjunct part to the report addressed in part D. Objective 6 (development of indicators for the role of language maintenance programs), objective 7 (development of measures of socio-cultural outcomes form language programs) and objective 8 (production of implementation indicators for incorporating socio-awareness objectives for LOTE programs) are addressed in Parts A, C and D.

Classification and program types

For ease of reporting the synthesis of the work conducted in the eight school contexts each program has been classified under the three broad categories given above:

- Bilingual education programs.
- "Ethnic" school programs.
- Certain types of mainstream school program.

Each program has also been identified using a more refined and accurate categorisation of program types as follows:

- Language Maintenance via Community Controlled Schooling (Arabic).
- Language Maintenance via Mainstream Schooling (Chinese, Italian and Khmer).
- Language Maintenance via Revitalisation and Revival (Noongar and Yindjibarndi).

The problem with the above typology is that it does not allow for crosscutting issues. For example, the Noongar and Yindjibarndi programs occur within 'Mainstream Schooling', one of the Italian programs is in the Victorian School of Languages which is not considered 'mainstream schooling' in Victoria, while the 'insertion program' is in mainstream schooling, but in (at least partially) community controlled context.

For these reasons we report the results by State and research site: New South Wales: Arabic; Western Australia: the Noongar, Yindjibarndi and Khmer; Victoria: Chinese and Italian.

Although the schools concerned have been identified to the Commonwealth in previous reports in this report we will adopt a convention of referring to them by the language name. In the case of Chinese and Italian where there are two schools each involved they will be referred to as Chinese A and Chinese B and Italian A and Italian B. This practice has been adopted to minimise any sense of sensitivity that is being experienced in some research sites, as indicated in relevant sections of this report.

APPRAISAL OF THE METHODOLOGY

The framework or approach to program evaluation adopted in this project derives from the work of Brian Lynch (Lynch 1996), and is known as the Context Adaptive Model of Program Evaluation.

The CAM approach to program evaluation is ideally suited to the aims of this project. The basic steps in the process are summarised thus (Lynch 1996, Chapter 9):

1 *Audience and goals:* establish the purpose(s) of the study by identifying the various audiences and their interests.
2 *Context inventory and preliminary thematic framework:* determine what is being evaluated.
3 *Evaluation design and data collection:* select a design and collect the data.
4 *Data analysis:* analyse and interpret your findings.
5 *Report:* communicate the findings to various audiences.

While the process was to some extent "cyclical," in the sense that each step had an influence on determining the character of the next step, the main data-gathering methods were interviews (with a wide range of stake-holders) and observations (of classes and programs in action.)

The principal personnel were:

- Senior researchers experienced in program evaluation and test design
- Bilingual research assistants (to record and transcribe classes, to interpret at interviews and meetings)
- Co-operating teachers (whose classes were observed, recorded and discussed).

The CAM is not in itself a research methodology nor is there an *a priori* favoured research methodology. The fourth step in the framework consists of the selection of an appropriate methodology for answering the questions formulated from the determination of evaluation audiences and the goals of these evaluation audiences. Deciding on a data collection design and a data collection system (a research methodology) is linked to the first three steps of the CAM.

Step one of the CAM involves the identification of evaluation audiences and goals. This is elaborated in step two, the development of a close understanding and documentation of the evaluation setting, the Context Inventory. Step three involves the formulation of a Preliminary Thematic Framework, for the project as a whole. The data gathering exercise was guided by decisions made by the project team about data collection systems and designs, step 4.

The project teams have focussed each site investigation according to the program 'as it exists in the field'. The understanding of the program comes from ideas and themes that emerge from the collection of information about the program rather than from concepts and hypotheses formulated prior to the evaluation. The findings are shared and negotiated with the evaluation audiences and in this interaction the information collection phase is influenced and refined.

In August 1998 the project teams formulated common understandings among themselves about CAM and its application around questions of: whom will we talk to, questions to pose, and methodologies to use. For these reasons while rather different questions and issues are explored at every site, there is also a set of common ones. Part A reflects the latter, and Part B the former.

The project team met with Dr Lynch in a workshop in February 8 and 9 1999 at the University of Melbourne to review our use of the CAM for the project and to refine understandings of it as well as to ensure that we shared a common language about it. Some evaluation of achievements differ across the sites given that not all of them permitted similar data to be gathered, and that in some cases 'quantitative' data gathering is not possible, nor is the same information available in all places.

PART A

SALIENT THEMES COMMON TO ALL STUDIES

Despite long consideration of the issues associated with community languages teaching and with the problem of establishing appropriate objectives for such programs (see Quinn 1981) the issue is far from resolved or even clear today (Clyne, Fernandez, Chen, Summo-O'Connell 1997).

The broad term 'maintenance' is commonly used (even though it will involve often substantial acquisition on behalf of the child assumed to be maintaining its language), and this is distinguished from wholly 'new learning' (which represents the more typical case of language study). However, these distinctions are complex and can only serve the purposes of provisional analysis (Lo Bianco 1987: 121-127).

For sake of brevity, there are two main differences between programs in languages other than English that are designed for language maintenance and programs that are principally for 'new' language acquisition.

The first difference involves assumptions about the knowledge learners are assumed to already hold of the target language (with associated assumptions about identity, level of proficiency, attitũde and other issues). This assumed knowledge is highly variable.

The second difference is the wider context of intergenerational language shift, i.e all language maintenance programs occur in an overall social setting of the loss of these languages. First there is a *functional restriction* (fewer and fewer functions are transacted in the language) then there is a steady reduction in the number of speakers. This constitutes language shift, as a community of speakers of the language moves away from its exclusive use to the use of the dominant societal language, in Australia's case English. For indigenous languages such 'language shift' ultimately means 'language death' since there are only Australian communities of speakers of these languages (Fishman 1991, McKay 1996).

Language shift and language death frame and influence all programs designed around the expectation of language maintenance. This is a major difference between all programs of schooling designed for 'maintenance' objectives, or influenced by such considerations, and those where traditionally the term 'foreign' languages teaching has applied.

However, differences among language communities and their socio-cultural contexts, are vast. The similarities described above relate to their common relationship with the other communicative medium, English, in Australia and with other 'foreign' languages. All other factors are internal to that language and culture community and these alter radically the possibilities, setting, program and other realities. Language death and shift while they both ultimately mean the disappearance of a speaker community for a given language is Australia, and in fact both permit the introduction of the language as a 'foreign' language within education, are radically unlike in all other ways. These differences are discussed in Part B. Below, in Part A, we discuss the similarities.

This section is a response to Objectives One and Two of the Project. Common themes in all language programs studies were identified and are presented below.

In Part B, in the 'site reports', comments on common salient themes are addressed only when the themes were found to be relevant to the particular site research.

1 The language maintenance objective is embedded in cultural, religious and identity issues.

For some of the language communities that form part of this study, religious variables, i.e .the association of the language with religious or spiritual practice, are critically important. Although clearest in the case of the Arabic case study, a similar relationship is evident in all the indigenous language groups.

Religious identity and issues are less salient for other groups, but the broad notion of cultural identity and transmission is relevant. All the language communities concerned share this.

An important consequence of the intricate relationship of these factors concerns assessment of language maintenance programs. Assessments of their *achievements and outcomes,* which do not acknowledge the wider social, religious and cultural identity frame within which these programs are conceived, is unlikely to be credible for the parents and communities concerned.

The consequences of the broader framework are especially important for the means and manner of assessment. Judgements about the validity of outcomes from such programs are likely to have to be negotiated extensively with the key stakeholders. Outsiders may find language criteria more amenable to assessment and critique whereas insiders are unlikely to consider language isolated from identity, religion and cultural questions as an acceptable criterion for program evaluation.

The shape and nature of the program types is influenced strongly by the particular relationship of the language-wider identity matrix. A religiously salient framework extends all the way through a program. I can determine everything from literacy practices (reading of the Koran requires devotional attitudes, demeanour and relationship to knowledge radically different from the critical literacy) to what kinds of knowledge are regarded as important and what kinds less so (or even kinds of knowledge regarded as altogether inappropriate in schooling). In some cases who may teach whom arises as a consequence of privileged or guarded knowledge.

2 Cultural authenticity, teacher knowledge/qualifications, staff development and methodology.

Unlike foreign or traditional second language programs, those programs that are conceived as facilitating the retention across generations of a given community's language give rise to a special set of considerations concerning knowledge.

Language maintenance programs typically involve immigrant or indigenous populations. The languages are invariably undergoing some level of attrition or functional restriction. The languages invariably also involve questions of dialect and register beyond those likely to be found in a traditional school LOTE program. The re-dialectalisation process in some languages is acute: this is especially so with Chinese and Italian in our sample languages.

In the case of Arabic there is also what linguists call diglossia, significantly marked High and Low forms, which are different from regular style, or dialect, distinctions. Chinese and Arabic also share a script standardising effect, in that highly variable spoken forms are standardised by the common written form.

There are also methodological consequences of such linguistic patterns. What 'normal' pedagogy may consider 'rote' learning can in the context of language maintenance programs be the result of reverence ideals for the texts of a particular language, the authority of the bearers of traditional knowledge, or the required nature of story telling genres. This is the case in some Aboriginal programs.

3 Learner use of the target language inside and outside the classroom

This factor is a significant and common one for language maintenance programs. It is commonly assumed that language maintenance programs involve the extension of children's restricted language registers to include academic registers.

This assumes that such learners actually use the target language in out-of-school contexts. It is clear from the case studies and sites in the present research project that this assumption is not always valid.

4 Social conservatism, separation and parochialism

This question arises intergenerationally among all communities (and especially in regional or rural settings) whether they are majority or minority communities in a given society.

However, the question of social conservatism, separation and parochialism takes on a particular relevance in cases of the retention of minority cultures. Although not directly a question of language the issue is relevant in this study.

There are many elements involved and the extent to which the judgements of young people about 'conservatism' or 'parochialism' influence their interest and commitment to maintaining and using the target language may be an important variable in the outcomes from such programs.

5 Language status issues, issues of language variety and 'ownership'

Language status refers not so much to any formally ascribed status as to the informal 'pecking order'. This question also arises in relation to non-standard varieties of the language concerned, and also to matters of 'ownership' and therefore of 'policing' of the standards of the language.

It has often been observed that on 'ethnic radio' issues of the permissibility of non-standard, or English-influenced and other variants of particular languages are causes of debate and sometimes of dispute.

Discussions of school standards obviously surface such considerations as well.

6 Vulnerability of programs due to population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries

The high intergenerational residential mobility of immigrant groups in Australia makes this issue relevant. Programs sometimes have their target population 'move out' from under them. This phenomenon of the mobility is also affected by staffing questions, and the vagaries of funding.

7 Organisational issues e.g. timetabling, placement and streaming, and parental involvement.

Cultural values, and 'linguistic culture' (Schiffman 1996), can have an effect on questions of how learners are grouped. This is the case concerning gender groupings as well as ability and gender groupings. There is considerable though incomplete evidence that females retain home languages more strongly than males. Some issues relevant to such questions have been identified in the present study. The role of parents and 'older informants' or authority figures are of relevance in several of the cases we examined.

8 Student attitudes & student motivation issues; student vs. parental notions & senses of identity.

Some of the matters that arise from considering student attitudes and motivation issues and divergent questions of identity have already been raised.

However, it is important to stress that identity becomes more salient in programs that seek to locate the learner within an established and continuing tradition.

However this tradition may not be one without options for the learner, as indeed is the case where assimilation pressures and personal preferences are available to learners in a multicultural society.

9 Issues of home language and school (English) language development.

In those language maintenance programs based in community controlled schooling the relative balance between home language and English arises.

10 Interaction between different programs and providers

Some language programs involved in language maintenance are delivered via several providers. The coordination, or lack of, among these is a question for exploration.

SITE REPORTS

Part B presents research on the following case studies:

- Arabic in New South Wales
- Khmer in Western Australia
- Italian and Chinese in Victoria
- Noongar, Yindjibarndi in Western Australia.

For each case study the results of the research are presented under the following headings unless the outcomes of a particular study warranted a slightly different presentation:

1 Background information
2 Salient themes
3 Evaluation achievements

ARABIC IN NEW SOUTH WALES

This research site offers a chance to contrast with the two types of language maintenance a third possible organisational form.

Arabic is both a major world language and a major community language in Australia, sharing in this way some of the features of Italian and Chinese and to a lesser extent Khmer and differing to this extent from the indigenous languages in this study.

However it is unlike Noongar and Yindjibarndi in terms of language vitality, and unlike Italian and Chinese in terms of direct association with religious culture and it is unlike all these languages and Khmer in terms of the organisational arrangements for the teaching and learning that are apparent in this site.

Arabic of course is, like Chinese though more so, but unlike any of the other research languages in this study, a 'transnational' language in that some 21 nations use a form of the language.

Research on three case studies were conducted on Arabic programs in New South Wales. They are referred to as follows:

- The Sunday School Study: Evaluation of the Arabic School A
- The Day School Study: Survey of students at High School B
- The Family Study: Survey of Arabic-speaking families.

Following is a brief description of the type of data collected for each study:

DATASET 1: The Sunday School Study: Evaluation of the Arabic School A.

Transcripts of informal exploratory interviews with staff at the Arabic School A, Sydney. The interviews took place over six visits. The material has been edited and used to write an evaluation report.

DATASET 2: The Day School Study: Survey of students at High School B.

Questionnaires and detailed interview notes from meetings with six Arabic speaking families, during which a total of 34 individuals were interviewed in their homes in Sydney individually or in groups. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of ethnic school attendance through the following objectives:

1 What effect has Arabic ethnic school study by children had on communication within the family?

2 What effect has Arabic ethnic school study by children had on their linguistic achievement in Arabic?

3 What effect has Arabic ethnic school study by children had on their sociocultural and attitudinal awareness?

DATASET 3: The Family Study: Survey of Arabic-speaking families

Questionnaires and detailed interview notes from meetings with eighteen Arabic speaking students at High School B, Sydney. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of ethnic school attendance through the following objectives:

1 What effect has Arabic ethnic school study by children had on their linguistic achievement in Arabic?

2 What effect has Arabic ethnic school study by children had on their mainstream school studies?

ARABIC SCHOOL A

Background to the data gathering

The Project Coordinator requested in principle approval from the NSW Ethnic Schools Board to approach Arabic ethnic schools for the purposes of the research. This approval was given, and officers of the NSW Community Schools Program suggested two schools. The researcher has had several meetings with the principal of one of these schools, who was sympathetic to the idea of an evaluation. However, the school's Board of Management did not agree, and a month was lost. Fortunately a senior member of another such school served on the same board and asked that his school be considered. Through this process, the Arabic School A was recruited to the project.

Special aspects of the setting

It was expected that the setting - a Muslim ethnic school - would pose special challenges to the investigators. The most important of these was the choice of Research Assistant; the school indicated a strong preference for a female investigator to visit the school, and a name was agreed on. The individual in question is a female Muslim from the same general community, an Arabic speaker, and a teacher by profession. Members of the school community were not overwhelmingly sympathetic to the project; there was an attitude of suspicion by some individuals that the school was being spied on.

Methodology

The Project Team was aware that they would have to tread very carefully and was reluctant to suggest data collection methods that might be felt to be intrusive. Instead, the Research Assistant arranged to visit the school on Sundays where she would be under the supervision of a senior staff member. The senior staff member would talk to her, and introduce her to other members of the school community.

These visits took place on five Sundays and the Research Assistant managed to talk to a number of staff and parents, to observe classes, and to ask questions of students through their teachers. During each visit, she made copious notes. There was no possibility of using a tape recorder. She then met with the Project Coordinator within a few days to discuss the data.

The Project Coordinator transcribed and edited the notes, and gave the Research Assistant a printout to be returned to the school. The school then made amendments and deletions to the printout, which was returned to the Project Coordinator for final editing and archiving.

After five visits, the team had the feeling that while the ice had been broken, the school wished to be left in peace. The presence of the Project itself made an impact. For example, it was reported to the team that the school's Board of Management had had heated discussions on what should be edited out of the printouts. Another impact was that during the last visit, the senior staff member explained that he was about to send a questionnaire to parents asking for their views on the school's program.

Given that this was the first such questionnaire, it is very likely that the senior staff member was motivated by the presence of the project in his school. The results of the questionnaire have been promised to the Project Coordinator.

Substantive Points

These points are arranged on the basis of questions proposed in an addendum to the September 1998 project team report. Some questions have no response; in some cases this is because the topic is dealt with by another question, in others because they form the basis for the 1999 workplan.

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What is the history of the program – its origins and development?

History

The school began in 1985, operating from the mosque with six small classes. After receiving its first grant in 1992, classes began at a Public School. Those premises burnt down in 1995, and the State Government found new premises at a local Boys High School and a Public School.

Organisation

The Sunday school operates separately from the other schools in the Lebanese Muslim Association group, with which it has a financial relationship. The LMA has about 1400 students, of which 50% are enrolled in the Sunday school. The school is divided into three sections, namely boys, girls and pre-school (mixed gender). There is a principal and three vice-principals.

The large number of students makes the separation into sections possible. The large number of students also make it possible to have graded classes, and in most cases it is possible for classes to contain students of the same age group. However, the students' level of competence in Arabic is the main principle in organising classes.

Staffing and class sizes

There are 34 teachers, and 700 students, using 34 classrooms. Average class numbers are 15-20, which is felt to be the maximum possible for good teaching of students above pre-school. Pre-schoolers (under fives) are in classes of thirty. Volunteers are important to the school, these being mainly parents. They assist teachers in the classrooms, as well as dealing with administration, discipline and homework, book distribution, recess supervision and snack sales. There is a shortage of male teachers, who are required for the older male students, and are needed to deal with certain very sensitive issues. The level of pay discourages teachers from joining the school, especially since they must either have qualifications or ten years of experience. It is planned to use female teachers for younger boys next year in the hope that their maternal influence will improve learning outcomes.

Funding

In 1998 the school receives $44 per student from the Department of Education and Training (via grants administered by the Ethnic Schools Board) for 415 students of the first 549 enrolled by the cut-of date of 8 March; funding was denied for 134 students. Three hundred additional students have been enrolled after the cut-off date, and an application has been made to fund them. The school charges a fee of $120 per student per annum, with the fee reduced for the second, third and fourth children in a family, and the fifth attending for free. Teachers receive $10 per hour, although some donate their wage back to the school.

Curriculum

There is no school curriculum; rather, the school follows NSW Government curriculum guidelines. Teachers do their own programming based on the areas to be covered, and carry out their own evaluation and enhancement of their programs. They are given considerable freedom in their approach to teaching.

Teaching methods

Teachers aim to impart the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, but have difficulties with listening skills because of a lack of equipment. Resources for modern equipment would improve the school by making it more similar to regular school. Examples are television, video and overhead projectors.

Teaching follows fairly traditional lines, with a heavy emphasis on grammar. In general, students are taught grammatical rules, and then apply the rules to example sentences. Teachers sometimes have to use English as a medium of instruction, especially with students who know little Arabic;

translation is very important as a means of explaining the meanings of Arabic words

Teaching qualifications

The school recently received a letter from the funding body to the effect that the classes of teachers who are not qualified will not be funded. The school is in the process of writing to the body showing that staff has either ten years experience or appropriate qualifications.

What is the philosophy of the program?

What are the objectives of the program?

The school aims to maintain Arabic as a medium of students' culture and religion. Language maintenance is seen as very important to help children communicate with their parents, so that the school plays an important role in maintaining family ties. The desire for Arabic language maintenance is reflected in the increasing demand for Arabic schools in Sydney.

Five goals are cited in lengthy fashion in the school's incorporation documents. In brief, these goals are concerned with:

- enhancing communication within families;
- replacing colloquial Arabic with formal Arabic;
- enriching multiculturalism;
- promoting awareness of Islam among Muslims;
- achieving objectives non-politically.

What are the relationships of the stakeholders with the program?

The role of parents

Parents are a vital part of the school. They are very supportive of the school's aims and are keen to talk to the teachers about the school's work. Like all schools, the Arabic School A needs to encourage some parents in matters of attendance, punctuality, return of books, homework and payment of fees.

Other resources

The school receives community support in the form of donations and volunteer work. Donations include books, certain goods from businesses, as well as money, which are given in the context of the Islamic duty to donate to worthy causes. A total of $1525 was donated last financial year.

What do the various stakeholders expect from the program?

Parents expect the children to learn some skills to help in the practice of religion. They also would like their children to be able to write letters to family overseas. The writing of notes is important, especially to parents who cannot write English; children can also translate letters from school. One parent mentioned that it is important to be able to read literature about Islam; education is not just a matter of training for a job, but in gaining knowledge for its own sake. Islam and Arabic are seen as inseparable; to know one, you have to know the other.

How do the stakeholders perceive the achievements of the program?

The school fills an important gap that parents cannot necessarily fill. There is a generation of parents who missed learning Arabic because of the lack of schools in Sydney, and cannot teach the language to their children; the school has taken over this role and has been able to achieve good results in both religious and language education.

Students who come to the school feel that they are part of a large, supportive community. Girls, for example, wear the scarf along with 400 others; they feel pride, rather than the shame and embarrassment they may feel in the mainstream school.

The large size of the school is advantageous for study; the children would not succeed if they were learning at home alone.

Being part of this environment – at least on Sunday – is important in preventing the children from forgetting their language and culture. The burden of passing on the language and culture in a foreign country is too heavy for an individual, so the support of schools and youth organisations is crucial in helping parents with this task.

Some parents mentioned that the children recite the Holy Qur'an when they are playing, and enjoy listening to religious songs; this is seen as a good sign that the school has had a positive effect.

Parents do not agree that the homework load is too heavy; they say that it takes about an hour to complete.

Some parents who are unable to help their children find that the children struggle, but eventually learn. Parents and teachers agree that success is due to three elements: a good program, skilled teachers, and a strong discipline system that ensures that homework is done regularly.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program from the point of view of the stakeholders?

What are the students' perceptions of the program?

Attitudes of Year 4 boys

The boys had mixed motives for being at school; parental pressure was significant in some cases. All could list at least two reasons for studying Arabic, the most popular being that they could communicate with parents and grandparents. Some mentioned the advantage of being able to holiday in the Arab World and not be ashamed of speaking poor Arabic. Several boys, who had clear career choices, mentioned Service to the community. Also mentioned was the advantage of learning to say prayers, learning about their religion and culture, and being able to express ideas unique to Arabic culture.

Some boys preferred to have one teacher for four hours rather than four different teachers; the change of teaching style was sometimes a problem. Another consequence is that the boys can be given four separate homeworks, when they already have a large mainstream homework load; however, there was not complete agreement on this, with some claiming that the homework load is manageable.

The boys would prefer to begin at 9.30 and have only three hours of Arabic on Sunday, or to have longer breaks in the four-hour session.

The boys generally prefer their Arabic teachers to their mainstream teachers because they can identify with them in terms of appearance, religion and culture. These teachers understand the problems that the boys have in Australian society, and are able to give them reassurance and advice in areas where the mainstream teachers' advice could conflict with their religion.

Boys' attrition

It was explained that boys tend to lose interest after the age of thirteen for a number of reasons including:

- that they begin to think of themselves as men and prefer not to study with smaller boys;
- that they worry if younger boys perform better than them;
- that they have too much regular school homework;
- that the commitment to study Arabic is very heavy;
- that if they give up, then they have at least learned the basics.

The teacher tries to motivate the boys by telling them that Arabic is a good HSC subject for them, that there are employment advantages, and that if they go overseas for work or leisure they will benefit from a high level of competence. But most importantly, the main purpose of learning Arabic is so that they can read their Holy Qur'an and maintain their religious heritage. Some boys regret giving up Arabic, and will return to it later.

What effect does the language program have on the rest of the program?

What is the role of sociocultural matters in the program?

Teaching materials

All the books are from overseas, e.g. Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. No locally produced materials are used. There is a need for the school to explore the matter of locally produced books, so that the students can relate their language learning to their life experience.

No Muslim Arabic school will use teaching materials which contain reference to alcohol, pigs and their products, sexual relationships and friendships between boys and girls, and any other issue that may be against the religion and its beliefs.

What actually happens in the classroom?

Observation of a Girls' class

Description of some teaching methods observed

This was a year 6 class of about 15 students ranging from the age of fourteen to fifteen. The activity was reading comprehension. The teacher reads the passage slowly, explains the words in simplified standard and asks the girls if they know the colloquial equivalent. If they do not, she tries to find an English word. The girls then read aloud in turns and are given a mark. Grammar points are taken from the text. The teacher does not explicitly state the rules, but tries to have the girls work out the principle from examples. Some group work is done with the girls split into two groups. The girls follow up at home by writing up the classroom material. Marks are lost if they do not copy down the homework instructions.

The medium of instruction

Again the girls use English with each other and for classroom discourse (even in pair work), but the teacher uses a simplified standard in the classroom. The teacher always uses Arabic in the classroom and encourages the girls to do the same, asking them to rephrase colloquial answers in standard.

Observation of another Girls' class

Description of some teaching methods observed

This was a year 3 class of twenty girls ranging in age from seven to twelve. The activity was reading comprehension. The girls were seated conventionally, were asked to read in turns, and were given marks for their performance. They are asked to stop when they come across a difficult word, and the teacher explains in Arabic. Sometimes she asks the girls to explain; if they use English, she asks them to rephrase in Arabic. She walks around the class helping the students individually.

The medium of instruction

Again the girls use English with each other but in this case they use Arabic with the teacher. The teacher uses colloquial Arabic, but uses standard when she constructs examples.

Observation of a Boys' class

Description of some teaching methods observed

In a year 3 boys' class of about 17 students ranging in age from ten to fourteen, the students were conventionally seated in rows facing the teacher. A dictation exercise was underway, beginning with a passage that the students had practised at home, and followed by a passage that the students had done in a previous week.

The teacher read the passage slowly three times, walking around the class to observe how students were performing.

The teacher dealt with a student who was slower than the rest by stopping and repeating until the boy had finished. During the second dictation, the student would stop to explain simple grammatical points, and would also stop to ask if students knew the meanings of some words. At the end of the dictation, the teacher walked around the class checking homework, mentioning to some students that their parents would be contacted if they did not complete work. The homework marks were entered in a register.

The last five minutes were spent in a quick revision, in this case of singular, dual and plural forms. A few broken plurals (*jam' taksiir*) were given. The teacher asks individual students for grammatical examples to check their knowledge; usually the examples are decontextualised, so that the focus is in the grammatical rule rather than its use in context.

The medium of instruction

Students speak to each other in English, and also speak to the teacher in English in matters of classroom discourse (eg. "what does it mean", etc.), while the teacher responded in Arabic. The teacher used colloquial and would explain the meanings of standard Arabic words through colloquial. Our observation was that while the students showed good Arabic skills in relation to the text studied, they had trouble with discussing personal concerns and in using classroom discourse

How do teachers interpret/describe what happens in the classroom?

What progress are students making in the language?

Educational attainment

The school feels that it is making good progress. There is a tendency for boys to be less interested by the age of fifteen. The task of learning Arabic is seen as difficult, especially in the limited time available. The school insists that time is not wasted and that a high level of discipline is maintained. There is a very efficient and disciplined atmosphere in the school, and students are noticeably quiet and well behaved. Progress is measured through exams, and there are weekly records and marks. Awards such as trophies and medals are given for educational attainment and good behaviour.

Girls' Performance

Both the boys' and girls' principals agree that girls perform better at the school. They are by nature considered to be more dedicated and interested in education. Their dedication to their faith means that they do not go out very much except within the bounds of appropriate behaviour, so they have more time to study at home. Although some of them are involved in sport and other community activities, they are left with more time than the boys have available. They take pride in presenting work of high quality and showing how well they have mastered the language. Because girls do better than boys, it is not possible for them to sit the same examinations. The girls' and boys' examinations simply reflect how much they have learned.

Assessment

Each teacher has a folder containing sheets for student names, attendance, class marks, etc. If, for example, a teacher has four classes, they keep four sets of records in the folder. For each assessable area there is a record sheet.

Attendance is marked for each lesson with a cross, circled for lateness. If a student fails to attend for two weeks, the parents are asked to send a written explanation. The school will ring the parents in case of repeated absences.

Marks are collected for each lesson. If for some reason a student's marks cannot be noted, a tick is placed against their name so that they can be the first to be marked in the following week. A cross is placed against the names of students who cannot be marked because of absence. All class marks are totalled at the end of term, and a new set of records is made up each term.

At the end of each day, teachers hand in their folders to their deputy principal, who takes them home to evaluate how each student is progressing, to read the brief lesson summary supplied by the teacher, to check attendance, and to write comments for the teacher. In this way, there is continuous assessment of the students and continuous evaluation of the teachers. The deputy principal also walks around the school, observing the performance of the teachers.

Daily assessment provides an incentive for all students to learn. They know that they must study and complete their homework, and would rather do the work than suffer the embarrassment of sanctions.

There are two examination sessions: mid-year and year-final. Although each teacher submits their own examination paper, all students of the grade are compared at the end of the year.

Examinations

Teachers write their own examinations, so that there is not a standardised assessment across grades or across genders. This means that it is not entirely possible to compare boys' and girls' performance.

Repeat class policy

If students fail a grade, they are not allowed to repeat unless their parents insist. Instead they are placed in the lower stream of the next grade. The school believes that repeating is not good for students' self esteem, and parents are asked to take responsibility when it occurs.

Homework

The school has a strict homework policy, insisting that students who have not completed their homework must finish the work at school under the supervision of a volunteer. Homework becomes less popular as the students get older, with students claiming that the already have mainstream school homework to do.

SALIENT THEMES

a The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues

The three studies revealed different opinions on this issue. While the Sunday School Study presented a somewhat rosy view of the natural connection between language maintenance and cultural, religious and identity issues, the Family studies revealed underlying tensions, and differing patterns from one family to another. While the Sunday School believes that Arabic language maintenance is a crucial aspect of cultural maintenance, there are widely varying views among students and family members. These range from an insistence that the loss of Arabic is the loss of ethnic Lebanese identity to a view that one can be Lebanese without knowing Arabic. These widely differing views can be found even within a single family.

In one of the families investigated in the Family Study there is a difference of views between parents and grandparents; the parents, who speak but do not read and write Arabic, put the highest priority on day school. They regard learning Arabic as a bonus, but not essential, and feel that one can be Lebanese without knowing Arabic well. The responsibility for the children's ethnic school attendance is borne by the grandmother, who helps with homework, makes sure that they attend, and chastises them when they complain about being bored with Arabic. For the children's part, the girls in the family have a strong sense of Lebanese identity, which is strengthened through their study of Arabic. The boy, however, is less clear on this point; he is torn between wanting to be Lebanese like his father, and wanting to be a blonde soccer playing "Australian". He hates ethnic school because he cannot keep up with the language work.

Another of the families handles the issue differently, with the parents believing strongly that Islam and Arabic are inextricably linked; not to teach children Arabic is to rob them of the chance to understand the Qur'an. At the same time, these parents want their children to function in mainstream society: they see their children as Australian with Lebanese background. For these parents, ethnic school is an extension of the family where they can find models of good behaviour and experience mutual respect and love. The teachers are often called "Uncle" and "Auntie". The parents clam that there is no difference between the behaviour and attitudes of the girls and boys in the family. The children's view, not unexpectedly, differs somewhat. They say they do not like going to ethnic school, and that they have no choice, but on the other hand praise the school because their entire family is involved in it in some way. Their feelings of Lebanese identity are rather indirect; while claiming to feel Lebanese, but only to understand what being Lebanese means vicariously through watching movies.

The parents in yet another family take a comparatively extreme attitude to the link between language and culture. For these parents, Arabic is a superior language without which a proper Lebanese life cannot be lived; to lose one's Arabic is a serious matter, and risks the children being lost to a mainstream society that lacks morals and respect. In mainstream society children are allowed to speak their minds without caring how others might react; ethnic school teaches them to respect others, something that is not taught at day school. There is a strict punishment regime in the home, that extends to sanctions for not speaking Arabic, and for speaking Arabic disrespectfully. The eldest son has a strangely equivocal attitude to ethnic school. While he claims to loathe the schoolwork (it is boring and always has a moral behind it) he finds it a haven from day school, where he is not liked or understood. He claims to find education in general a waste of time. The eldest sister on the other hand feels entirely Lebanese and loves ethnic school because it brings her even closer to her Lebanese identity. She is content to marry early and have children. The younger boys and girls identify totally with Lebanese culture, but are making slow progress at ethnic school. They seem to have constructed a somewhat artificial model of Lebaneseness, with one boy projecting versions of the model coloured with notions of violent and illegal behaviour. Of interest is that the children claim to use a great deal of Arabic, but in fact speak mostly English with an admixture of poor Arabic.

A more moderate attitude is expressed by a family in the study where the parents believe that Arabic is useful for understanding the Qur'an, but that English is sufficient for other purposes; if Arabic study gets in the way of English study, the children will have to stop learning Arabic. Interestingly, the children link their Arabic study to their Muslim identity, having broken the connection between Islam and Lebaneseness. They describe themselves as Australian Muslims with Lebanese grandparents. They are greatly influenced by a modest and calm teacher who believes that they should maintain a strong Australian identity "with a bit of a twist".

In one very large family - with ten children - strict adherence to Lebanese values is tempered with constructive attitudes to education and with debate in the family about the link between language and culture. While the parents believe that Arabic is essential for Muslim religious purposes, they concede that the children will always be stronger in English, and that there are personality factors that influence how much Arabic they will learn. The grandmother, on the other hand, finds it inconceivable that the children can be Lebanese and English-speaking: "Our language is our culture". Among the children, there is a range of attitudes. One older boy loves ethnic school and now teaches there. He learns a great deal about Lebanon that he simply would not learn elsewhere. He claims to feel Lebanese at home, but a school belongs to "a multicultural group". Like one child mentioned previously his Lebanese identity is vicariously acquired from "what others tell us". By contrast, his younger brother dislikes ethnic school and does not place much importance in religion. On the other hand he has a strong feeling of "pure" Lebanese identity, which he is perfectly happy to experience through the medium of English: "To be Lebanese means to look in the mirror and see a Lebanese person".

This is a position he has come to despite being offered alternative models. He disagrees, for example, that he is "an Aussie Muslim with Lebanese heritage".

In conclusion, the Family Study revealed these main points about the link between the language maintenance objective and other cultural, religious and identity issues among Lebanese Muslim families:

1 Cultural and religious identity is the principal motivation for Arabic language maintenance.

2 In accordance with the notion that Islam provides the basis for all aspects of human conduct, the perceived outcomes range from the learning of proper relationships and behaviour to understanding the Qur'an.

3 There are more and less sophisticated beliefs among parents about the strength of the link and its implementation, ranging from moderate and sensible views to very extreme ones. Some families have separated out the notion of a Muslim identity from a Lebanese identity.

4 The ethnic school is seen as an extension of the family.

5 Lebanese identity is felt by some children to have been vicariously acquired through what they have learned at ethnic school.

b In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology

It was found in the Sunday School Study that the program relies heavily on overseas teaching resources and on teachers with home country qualifications and experience, whose methodological approaches are conservative. However, there is evidence that this traditional approach is favoured by parents and students as a haven from the more liberal regime of mainstream school. The Sunday School sees the teachers as a useful resource for providing an interpretation of the host community value system.

The Family Study allowed this question to be probed further, and the following observations can be made:

Teaching and learning strategies

Memorising is used as a learning strategy, and students frequently claim that this skill helps them in their day school study for example in memorising formulae.

Some students claim that the conservative teaching style helps them to study efficiently at day school, where they "listen very hard ... and follow instructions to the letter".

Content

Content is taught at ethnic school (especially geography) which fills perceived gaps in the content taught at day school. Some students feel pleased when they can use this content in creative writing at day school.

Some students claim that the books used in ethnic school are not suitable, or are boring. One student, commenting on the stories about Lebanon said: "I think life is boring there if that's all they do ... It seems that everyone there never does anything wrong".

Ethnic school is said by some students to provide contexts for language use that do not occur at home, eg. praying, asking politely, words for school needs like pencils and books.

The role of teachers

Some students feel more comfortable with their ethnic schoolteachers because they claim that at day school "Aussies are treated better than ethnics". Teachers are almost extended family members: "... the teachers know our parents and can speak to them and understand them".

Ethnic schoolteachers are frequently said to explicitly guide students in forming a cultural identity. They are valued as models of morality and good behaviour. Students often comment that ethnic schoolteachers teach them to speak politely: "When you're introducing yourself you have to do it in the proper way. My brothers don't know the difference because they don't listen to the teacher".

Teachers give explicit instruction on matters of faith and religious observance.

Discipline is frequently said to be maintained by parents being shamed when a teacher contacts them about poor behaviour.

EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Linguistic achievement as revealed by the Day School Study:

Pseudonym	No. years at Ethnic School	**1 How well can you read letters from relatives in Lebanon/Egypt etc?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	11	Very well	Know the language well after 11 years of ES
Ali	10	Reading is very poor. Can guess the meanings of words from context, but it takes time.	ES helps; couldn't do it without ES.
Mayme	7	Very well. People write as they speak. Difficult if they write in formal Arabic	Ethnic school helps; it is where we learn to read and write.
James	6	Can understand handwriting and what I'm reading. If a word is too long I say it to myself, or ask mum and dad.	ES school helped; taught me to sound out words.
Abrahim	5	Can read them a little bit. Can spell them out but it takes time.	Mum helped ES school helped. ES doesn't teach us to read other people's handwriting.
Bil	5	Can barely read letters. even if I read Can understand only 60-70% slowly	Haven't been to ES for a while; lack of practice makes you forget.
Pebbles	5	Can spell them but can't read them	Didn't do letter writing at ES. Forgetting how to read, haven't been to ES for two years.
Fatima	5	Can't	Still reading single words at ES
Omar	4	Can spell out the words, but can't read them fast.	We don't do that sort of work at ES, just passages from textbooks.
Rue	4	Takes time, and only successful if writing is neat.	Would not be able to read anything without going to ES
Mona	3	Can read, but not well Problems understanding Standard Arabic	Would not be able to read anything without going to ES
Mandy	1	Not well	
Kuku	1	Cannot read letters.	Haven't been to ES for a while; lack of practice makes you forget.
Nower	1	Can't	
Booboo	0	Can't read letters.	
Sandy	0	Can't read letters	
Vyv	0	Can't	
Sam	0	Can't	

Summary of Question 1: None of the four students who had not attended ethnic school could read letters from relatives. If those who attended ethnic school, about two thirds either could not read letters or could barely read them; spelling out the words was the general limit of their achievement. This group had attended ethnic school for between one and ten years. Problems included deciphering handwriting and coping with Standard Arabic. Only two students claimed to read letters very well, although one conceded that she could read letters if people " write as they speak", i.e. in dialect rather than Standard

Arabic. On the whole, students felt that Ethnic School had helped them in their ability to read letters, as a result of the general skills they had learned in Standard Arabic. Indeed there was some evidence – with some notable exceptions – that the ability to read letters increases with years of Ethnic School attendance. However, no student mentioned that Ethnic School specifically teaches letter-reading.

Pseudonym	**2 How well can you write letters to relatives in Lebanon/Egypt etc?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	Can write, but nobody to write to.	Have learnt to write letters at ES.
Ali	Hard to write in Standard Arabic, but easier to write as we talk.	ES taught us at least to write as we talk.
Mayme	Can write letters, but make mistakes. Find it hard to spell.	ES teaches us spelling and writing; they teach us not to write as we speak.
James	Only written a letter twice, writing as I speak.	Practiced writing letters at ES, but still can't write in formal Arabic.
Abrahim	Never write letters to Lebanon.	ES didn't teach this.
Bil	Can put letters together to make words, but have forgotten rules for grammar.	
Pebbles	Can't write any more – only my name and some simple words. Can't write my thoughts in Arabic.	Forgotten how to read, haven't been to ES for two years.
Fatima	Can't write letters; if I try, nobody can read them because I can't spell.	
Omar	Don't write letters to anyone.	
Rue	Can only write as I speak.	ES school helped to put letters together, but not how to construct complex sentences or use difficult vocabulary.
Mona	Can write the way I speak.	Learned how to write formal and informal – informal by rewriting formal the way we speak. Mum helps.
Mandy	Not well	
Kuku	Can't – lack of practice.	
Nower	Can't write letters	
Booboo	Can't write letters.	
Sandy	Can't write letters	
Vyv	Can't write letters	
Sam	Can't write letters	

Summary of question 2: The students who did not attend Ethnic School could not write letters. For the students who did attend Ethnic School, the matter was a complex one. Firstly there is a hint that Arabic letter writing is irrelevant: one student who is very competent in Arabic has "nobody to write to"; another had " only written a letter twice". The second complication is the matter of writing in Standard Arabic. Frequently, students say that they can write as they speak, i.e. in dialect, but not in Standard Arabic. A telling comment by one student is that " I can't write my thoughts in Arabic". A few students said that they had learned letter-writing at Ethnic School, but most felt that any limited ability they had was a result of general skills in writing that Ethnic School had taught them.

Pseudonym	**3 How well can you read books or newspapers from Lebanon/Egypt etc?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	Can read them well. I read Mum's magazines when I'm bored.	Magazine articles are used at ES for comprehension
Ali	Almost impossible to read standard Arabic books and newspapers. Can read the words but not connect them together.	ES helps but cannot make us fluent readers.
Mayme	Read textbooks from school well but never read newspapers or magazines – print is too small	No practice at ES
James	Sometimes don't understand the words – ask my parents or guess the meaning by reading on.	We read one-page stories at ES.
Abrahim	Can read them but it is difficult – have to spell them out	Read textbooks at ES but not newspapers
Bil	Not well.	What I know is from ES.
Pebbles	Can't	
Fatima	Can't.	
Omar	Read textbooks from school well but never read newspapers or magazines – too difficult	
Rue	Can read very slowly, but find it hard to understand sometimes.	ES school helped a bit but skills decreased when I stopped going.
Mona	Read textbooks from school well but never read newspapers or magazines.	
Mandy	Read textbooks from school well but never read newspapers or magazines. Can't read novels.	
Kuku	Can't	
Nower	Can't read the words but enjoy looking at magazines.	Can normally read the name of a movie on a video cover.
Booboo	Can't	
Sandy	Can't	
Vyv	Can't	
Sam	Can't	

Summary of question 3: Of the students who had not attended Ethnic School none could read Arabic newspapers or magazines. Of those who had attended, most could achieve no more than reading odd words, even after ten years of Ethnic School. Only one student read them well – her mother's magazines when she is bored. One other student reads them and asks for help from his parents. The crux of the matter may be that Arabic newspapers and magazines play no role in the lives of these students; they are part of their parents' world. On the whole, Ethnic Schools did not place a high priority on reading this material; only two students mentioned that they had read magazine material at Ethnic School, although there was a feeling that Ethnic School had helped with general reading skills.

Pseudonym	**4 How often do you read them?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	Once a week, maybe more	
Ali	Rarely	
Mayme	Seven hours a week including homework, Qur'an and ES.	
James	Don't read often. Used to read for homework at ES	ES used to concentrate a lot on reading
Abrahim	Once a week for homework with mum's help	
Bil	Don't read very often. Wouldn't go out of my way to read in Arabic.	
Pebbles	Not often	
Fatima	Never	
Omar	Read books at ES and when doing homework once a week	
Rue	Now not even once a month; about twice a week when I was at ES	
Mona	Never	
Mandy	Every Saturday for about three hours	
Kuku	Never	
Nower	Never	
Booboo	Never	
Sandy	Never	
Vyv	Never	
Sam	Never	

Summary of question 4: The students seem to have misunderstood this question. Instead of talking about how often they read Arabic newspapers and magazines, they spoke of reading Arabic material in general. The students who had not attended Ethnic School never read in Arabic. Of those who had attended, reading in Arabic – up to seven hours a week – was related to homework or religious matters. One student said that he "wouldn't go out of my way to read in Arabic", and indeed when students give up Ethnic School they appear to give up reading in Arabic.

Pseudonym	**5 How well can you understand videos in Arabic?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	Very well – like English.	
Ali	Can understand movies in Lebanese. Can't understand documentaries of news in Standard Arabic. Movies in other dialects are very hard.	ES school doesn't help; movies are not shown.
Mayme	Only if it is slow Lebanese. Can't understand it if it is fast or Egyptian.	
James	Understand: Lebanese very well but Egyptian and Formal Arabic are hard.	Never watched videos at ES.
Abrahim	Understand: Lebanese very well but Egyptian is hard. Can't understand formal Arabic at all.	ES helps be because teacher tells us new words.
Bil	Have trouble understanding some words but can normally make out the meaning.	
Pebbles	Very well	Learned many new words at ES.
Fatima	A little if they are in Lebanese or another dialect, but not Formal.	Didn't watch videos at ES
Omar	Understand: Lebanese very well but Egyptian is like a different language.	ES teacher only speaks Lebanese so we don't hear other types.
Rue	Quite good if it is Lebanese. Cannot understand Egyptian speech.	Used to watch interviews at ES in Egyptian but couldn't understand them.
Mona	Understand: Lebanese very well but other dialects are a bit hard.	ES teacher would sometimes bring a video for comprehension.
Mandy	Very well	
Kuku	Very well.	ES helped by explaining words in English.
Nower	Very well, even Egyptian videos	ES didn't help much
Booboo	Can understand most of the time. Cannot understand Egyptian or Formal.	
Sandy	Can understand if the speech is slow or in Lebanese. Can understand music videos even if they are not in Lebanese.	
Vyv	Only if it is slow Lebanese	
Sam	Not very well. Can understand some words and then make sense of it.	

Summary of question 5: All the students could understand videos in Arabic to some extent, but only if they were in Lebanese dialect; only one student said he could understand Egyptian videos.. Even those who had not attended Ethnic School could understand them – although usually not well. Students who had attended Ethnic School were generally more competent, ranging from those who understood them "a little bit" to "very well". Years of attendance seem to make little difference; watching videos is a skill learned in the home. The general language developments of Ethnic School were appreciated by some, but only two students said that videos had been used at Ethnic School -in one case in incomprehensible Egyptian dialect.

Pseudonym	**6 How often do you watch them?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	once a month	
Ali	Never; previously watched with parents	
Mayme	once a month	
James	three times a week	
Abrahim	once a week	
Bil	fairly often – they help maintain your Arabic	
Pebbles	2 hours per week	
Fatima	1.5 hours per week with mum	
Omar	once a week	
Rue	Every few months – no fluent Arabic speakers in the household	
Mona	1 hours per week	
Mandy	nearly every day because Mum doesn't like English TV	
Kuku	twice a month	
Nower	2 hours per week	
Booboo	Lebanese videos once a week. Arabic TV one hour per day	
Sandy	Arabic TV every night for two hours because parents watch it	
Vyv	None at home; watch twice a month at cousin's house	
Sam	A few minutes a day. Get sick of it because it is so fast	

Summary of question 6: All the students watched or had watched Arabic videos with some regularity, ranging from every day to once every few month. The data suggest that video watching is a social activity, with the frequency of viewing related to the viewing patterns of relatives. No student commented on the role of Ethnic School, and there was no relationship between viewing habits and length of Ethnic School attendance.

Pseudonym	**7 Do you interpret for your relatives?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	no	
Ali	Interpret sometimes, but not good at it. Can't do written translation.	Didn't do it at ES.
Mayme	Interpret for my brother if mum speaks to him in Arabic	We do this at ES. I we say something in English we have to say it again in Arabic.
James	Interpret for cousins and Auntie.	ES school helps. If you say something in English the teacher tells you how to say it in Arabic.
Abrahim	no	
Bil	a fair bit	ES school helps. If you say something in English the teacher tells you how to say it in Arabic. You learn to interpret that way
Pebbles	no	
Fatima	not usually but sometimes for dad	
Omar	no	
Rue	for grandmother	If I didn't go to ES couldn't do anything in Arabic because we mostly speak English at home.
Mona	no	
Mandy	dad does it for mum; I help by speaking to her in Arabic	
Kuku	no	
Nower	no	
Booboo	hardly ever – for grandma	
Sandy	Interpret for Aussies who can't speak Arabic. Can only interpret from Arabic into English.	
Vyv	Interpret for friends from Arabic to English.	
Sam	Interpret for friends from Arabic to English.	

Summary of question 7: Interpreting fell into two categories: Three of the four students who had not attended Ethnic School claimed to interpret for friends from Arabic to English – a recreational, fun activity. The second category was interpreting for relatives, and this occurred when the need arose; regardless of Ethnic School attendance, students interpreted if a relative required it. One student, surprisingly, claimed that she interpreted between her mother and her brother. Most students who commented on the contribution of Ethnic School were positive in their evaluation, suggesting that they had learned to interpret by being asked to rephrase English as Arabic.

Pseudonym	**8 Where do you interpret for them?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	n/a	
Ali	At home. Sometimes at school or shops or doctor, but hardly ever.	
Mayme	at home	
James	shopping, at home, watching TV	
Abrahim	n/a	
Bil	watching TV or reading a letter	
Pebbles	n/a	
Fatima	for dad at shops, school, at home if he is writing or using the computer	
Omar	n/a	
Rue	shopping, doctor, watching TV	
Mona	n/a	
Mandy	shopping with mum or watching TV	
Kuku	n/a	
Nower	n/a	
Booboo	shopping or out with grandma	
Sandy	With friends at Lebanese restaurant or hairdresser.	
Vyv	school – swear words, greetings and songs "I hang around a multicultural group"	
Sam	Playground at day school – usually rude	

Summary of Question 8: The three students who had not attended Ethnic School and who claimed to interpret for friends were actually describing a kind of multilingual banter where, in a mixed language group, an Arabic speaker makes a playful or ribald utterance in Arabic and a friend explains it in English. Among the other students, interpreting was more prosaic – typically at home watching TV, shopping, or at the doctor.

Pseudonym	**9 In what other places do you speak Arabic?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	day school in playground mosque ethnic school Arncliffe home shopping with mum visiting relatives with friends with friends parents	
Ali	only at home used to speak it at Arabic school	ES school helps us speak better because teachers correct our speech
Mayme	day school ethnic school mosque cousins house home shopping with mum	
James	home school visiting with friends parents mosque doctor shops	
Abrahim	at home at day school at ethnic school with cousins shopping with mum mosque sometimes in class	ES school helped me talk better Arabic
Bil	with Lebanese students with anyone who can speak it mosque Lebanese shop	ES helped to give me confidence to speak Arabic in public and a school without feeling different.
Pebbles	home day school friends relatives accidentally to non-Arabic speakers	
Fatima	home day school shops relatives houses mosque	
Omar	almost everywhere if I know someone speaks Arabic, I don't speak to them in English not at day school	

Rue	relatives mosque shops school – a few words	ES taught us to say the vocabulary and phrases for those situations – very important if parents do not know
Mona	ethnic school home with parents relatives shopping with mum mosque not at day school	At ES learn how to speak in different situations through reading and discussion
Mandy	at home at day school with friends with cousins almost everywhere	
Kuku	home visiting relatives day school church	
Nower	everywhere prefer English with friends at home with mum and dad – English not allowed at day school for secret speech	
Booboo	home sometimes at school at parents' coffee shop relatives houses	Learning more by praying and memorising Qur'an
Sandy	at work (reception hall for Arabic speakers) shopping at home with family and friends	
Vyv	mostly at school prefer English at home – nervous in case I make a mistake	
Sam	sometimes at home at day school for fun at cousins house	

Summary of question 9: The range of situations where students used Arabic was similar among those who had and had not attended Ethnic School: at home, with relatives, at school, at work, at places of worship. A preference for English at home was not limited to students who had not attended Ethnic School; indeed, one such student used Arabic at the reception hall where she worked. Use at day school revealed a more complex picture: some students were adamant that they did not use Arabic at day school, others did use Arabic. One student found it useful for private conversations with fellow Arabic speakers at school. Some of the Ethnic School students commented on the role of the schools in developing their ability to speak in different situations; the comments were mainly on the lines that Ethnic School helped them to speak more formally in situations where a higher register is required.

Pseudonym	**10 Do you use Arabic differently in different places? eg. at school, at home, with friends**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Revlon	Use more polite Arabic with older people. We speak Arabic mixed with English	
Ali	No, only dialect	ES didn't teach us to speak differently
Mayme	No There is only one way to speak unless you're giving a formal speech in Arabic.	
James	use slang at school take more care at home because mum would laugh and correct me	learn to speak properly because the teacher corrects us – we learn to speak in different situations
Abrahim	with friends I use words I'm not allowed to use at home at home I speak politely to my parents use special greetings at mosque	Teacher corrects me at ethnic school – teaches me polite words instead of rude ones I learn special greetings for the mosque at ethnic school
Bil	colloquial Arabic at school more formal and respectful language at home	ES teaches right from wrong in language use.
Pebbles	yes – there are different levels of respect at school we can say "shit" or "donkey" at home I speak with care I can use the language in different situations	At ES we learn to ask questions politely, and to wait for someone to stop speaking before we answer. We learn to buy things and greet strangers.
Fatima	yes I speak differently to Christians I speak my mother's dialect at home, and my friends' dialect at school I use more slang at school. more respect at home.	At ES we get practice by being in a class where all the students come from different parts of Lebanon.
Omar	no	
Rue	yes – certain words are not used in some places or even in some areas of Lebanon – it is to do with the level of respect speaking to a teacher is not the same as speaking to a friend at home we all speak the same way	At ES they teach us what is appropriate and what is not.
Mona	yes I use polite Arabic to speak to people	ES teaches that in Qur'an we have formal language, tells us how to be nice and polite to people.
Mandy	no	
Kuku	no	
Nower	same Arabic all the time sometimes I use words at day school that I am not allowed to use at home	
Booboo	slang at school with friends more formal at home, but I'll use English if I can't say it properly difficult to discuss issue in domestic Arabic	

Sandy	polite Arabic at home – have to be careful how we speak at school we don't care how we speak
Vyv	I speak differently at home because my parents would consider it rude. If I can't say something politely at home, I won't say it.
Sam	sometimes at home at day school for fun at cousins house

Summary of question 10: There was a rich awareness of language variation among most of the students – even those who had not attended Ethnic School. The salient issue was politeness and appropriateness when speaking to elders and teachers; frequently students spoke of the need to speak carefully and respectfully at home, and the latitude to use relaxed language with friends. Some students were aware of dialect variation even among Lebanese speakers, and one was even able to switch from her mother's dialect to the predominant dialect among her school friends. One Muslim student explained how she was able to adapt her speech when speaking to Christians. Success in handling language variation was attributed to Ethnic School by numerous students, where they learned "right from wrong", "polite" language, "special greetings for the mosque", and how to manage polite turn taking with elders. One student praised the spread of dialects encountered at Ethnic School.

Pseudonym	**11 How well do you understand Arabic speakers speaking?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Mona	easy	
Omar	very well	
Mandy	very well	
Abrahim	Lebanese and Syrian very well, but not Egyptian	only learn Lebanese at ES
Bil	The more colloquial, the more I understand	ES makes us more open to Arabic speaking community
Ali	OK, but if they are new to Australia they use words I don't understand; difficult if they speak about topics we don't speak about.	ES doesn't cover these areas
Kuku	Can understand everything.	Learnt Lebanese from Mum and Dad, and Standard Arabic at ES.
James	Very well.	ES teaches us new words so our Arabic improves
Rue	Very well	ES didn't help with speaking, but with reading and writing.
Booboo	Very well if Lebanese	
Sandy	Understand slow speakers well, but fast speakers not well.	
Nower	Very well	Went to Lebanon with parents and learnt to speak much better; ES helps.
Pebbles	Very well	Not sure if ES makes a difference.
Fatima	Very well unless very formal	ES teacher reads in standard but explains in dialect.
Vyv	Understand most if people speak slowly. Not fluent enough to express my thoughts into words or have a long conversation with an older person	
Sam	Understand dialect but not formal	
Revlon	Very well; had problems when younger but now more confident.	
Mayme	Understand perfectly well but have to think very hard about answers	

Pseudonym	**12 How well do you understand formal Arabic on the radio?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Mona	Understand but sometimes have to guess by understanding a couple of words.	We do listening comprehension from radio interviews at ES
Omar	Not well, but I can guess	Only do [reading] and writing at ES
Mandy	Understand most because I listen with my mother.	
Abrahim	Not at all; Mum listens but I don't understand anything in formal.	We read formal at ES but don't listen to tapes.
Bil	To a certain extent, though some words are confusing	Reading at ES improves vocabulary.
Ali	Not at all; sometimes I get the gist if I hear a familiar word	
Kuku	Harder to understand; can make out the meaning from words I know.	Learn lots of formal words at ES
James	Not very well.	Didn't learn how to listen to formal Arabic at ES
Rue	Can understand the main idea, but there are words and sentences I don't understand.	Learn lots of formal Arabic at ES but not how to listen. Listening comprehension is read by the teacher; radio is fast and you don't get a second chance.
Booboo	Not very well	
Sandy	Can't	
Nower	Not very well – I make out the meaning sometimes but it is like a different language.	
Pebbles	Very well	Learn it at ES and maintain it by radio and TV
Fatima	Not at all – only listen to it in the car with Dad – find it boring	Never listen to radio at ES
Vyv	Not well – can make out what they are saying if I listen carefully	
Sam	Not at all	
Revlon	Very well	Use it at ES and Qur'an School. Teacher speaks in formal when she is giving a lesson about Islam. She uses formal and Lebanese so we understand better.
Mayme	Well	Teacher speaks in formal Arabic when she is talking about the topic of the lesson, then explains in Lebanese

Pseudonym	**13 How good are you at Arabic grammar?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Mona	Can convert a passage from masculine to feminine or plural – knowledge is not bad at all	Have learnt more than I realise.
Omar	Not very good	Don't do much grammar – we talk about nouns and verbs but it is very complicated
Mandy	Don't know any of it. I don't make mistakes but I don't know how to break it down into grammar.	
Abrahim	Not that good. Always make mistakes especially with plural, singular, masculine, feminine.	Don't learn it at ES – still learning to read and write.
Bil	Don't know theories and rules of grammar, but I'm more comfortable with grammar that I use on a day to day basis	
Ali	Not good at all. Can't understand the rules for numbers, masculine, feminine, plural, and singular.	They try to teach it at ES but you need to practice for 2-3 hours a day.
Kuku	Not at all	
James	Pretty good	Learnt it at ES and know how to apply it in reading and writing.
Rue	I know how to apply it but not how to analyse it	Did a lot of grammar at ES but have forgotten it. ES helps you because you don't do grammar at home.
Booboo	Not good – can't tell the difference between masculine and feminine, singular and plural	
Sandy	Not at all	
Nower	Don't know the rules, but I don't make mistakes. Never learnt grammar	
Pebbles	Not at all. Can't remember any of it.	Don't think we did grammar at ES
Fatima	Not good – I apply it when speaking but in writing I wouldn't know	Not doing grammar at ES
Vyv	Don't know it.	
Sam	Can identify grammar points but don't know what they are called.	
Revlon	Very well.	We study it at ES
Mayme	Know it well and can apply it.	Study it all the time at ES.

Pseudonym	**14 Do you help your relatives fill out forms in English if they don't speak English well?**	Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?
Mona	mum	ES school doesn't teach this
Omar	no	
Mandy	mum	
Abrahim	no	
Bil	regularly for my father – can interpret letters and forms well	direct result of ES
Ali	always	ES doesn't help
Kuku	mum and dad sometimes	
James	sometimes	not relevant to ES
Rue	no	
Booboo	no	
Sandy	yes	
Nower	no	
Pebbles	sometimes	
Fatima	mum and dad	
Vyv	no	
Sam	auntie	
Revlon	sometimes	
Mayme	mum	

Pseudonym	**15 When your Arabic teacher speaks to you in Arabic in class do you reply in Arabic? Always? How often?**	Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?
Mona	always in Arabic	
Omar	always in Arabic	
Mandy	always in Arabic	
Abrahim	always in Arabic	If i say it in English the teacher helps me say it in Arabic
Bil	Always in Arabic. If I don't know how to say it I use English words in an Arabic sentence	
Ali	always in Arabic	
Kuku	Try to answer in Arabic but use English if I have to.	
James	Mostly in Arabic	
Rue	Half in English, half in Arabic	Teacher teaches us to say it properly
Booboo	n/a	
Sandy	n/a	
Nower	always in Arabic	
Pebbles	always in Arabic	
Fatima	always in Arabic	
Vyv	n/a	
Sam	n/a	
Revlon	always in Arabic	
Mayme	always in Arabic	

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Pseudonym	**16 If you want to ask the Arabic teacher a question, do you ask in Arabic? Always? How often?**	**Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?**
Mona	always in Arabic – some teachers don't understand English	
Omar	always in Arabic	
Mandy	always in Arabic	
Abrahim	always in Arabic – teacher doesn't understand English	
Bil	In Arabic unless it is too difficult. If can't say it in Arabic sometimes I manipulate English to sound like Arabic	
Ali	always in Arabic	
Kuku	depends on what I have to ask	Sometimes I speak in English and the teacher makes me say it again in Arabic
James	mostly in Arabic	
Rue	no response	if ask in English the teacher asks me to rephrase it in Arabic
Booboo	n/a	
Sandy	n/a	
Nower	mostly in Arabic but I'll use an English word if I don't know it in Arabic	
Pebbles	Both languages; I accidentally use an English word in an Arabic sentence	
Fatima	Both – more natural in English	
Vyv	n/a	
Sam	n/a	
Revlon	always in Arabic	
Mayme	Mostly Arabic.	If there is a word I don't know in Arabic I say it in English and the teacher corrects me.

Pseudonym	17 If Arabic classes, do you speak to the other students in Arabic or English?	Have your ethnic school classes helped you to do this better?
Mona	Both	
Omar	mostly Arabic but depends on what I'm talking about	
Mandy	some in English because they are not good in Arabic; easier to use English because they all speak different dialects	
Abrahim	in English if the teacher can't hear me	
Bil	both, depending on what I'm talking about	
Ali	mainly in English	we get into trouble if we don't speak Arabic to teachers
Kuku	English	
James	both depending on the topic	
Rue	mostly in English with an occasional Arabic word thrown in	
Booboo	n/a	
Sandy	n/a	
Nower	mostly English	
Pebbles	Arabic	
Fatima	English	
Vyv	n/a	
Sam	n/a	
Revlon	both but more in Arabic	
Mayme	mostly Arabic	

KHMER IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A remarkable feature of the Khmer-English language program is the way that it has changed over time. One reason for this has been changes in the student population. Initially, the program was established to serve the needs of learners of English as a Second Language and to "allow for trialling of an alternative form of provision to assist non English-speaking background (NESB) students in accessing mainstream education" (Ministry of Education 1993:3) since "other models of provision had not been explored to any great extent in Western Australia" (ibid). The impetus for investigating an alternative approach was provided by "teachers' observations that Khmer-speaking students appeared to 'plateau' at Year 4, their English language background being insufficient to progress past this point" (Oliver & Rochecouste 1997:219). Other aims of the project were "to enhance the self-esteem of the Cambodian children and to promote inter-cultural awareness amongst children in the school" (Barrett-Pugh et al 1996:7).

However, over the period of eight years that the program has been running there has been a significant change in the needs of the students. The very first students whose primary education has been totally bilingual have now graduated and attend the local High School and the lower year levels are filled by their siblings whose exposure to English is far greater than theirs was. These students have received help with the acquisition of English at home from the older children and have had exposure provided through television and contact with Australian society. This has meant that the role that the program played in providing a transition to English no longer applies.

Soon after its commencement, the Steering Committee of parents requested that their children also be taught to read and write in Khmer. This resulted in a complete change in the direction of the program and enabled it to continue beyond the initial ESL transition objective. Over time however the teacher's own energy levels and the movement of families has meant that the program has been scaled down considerably and now, with reduced hours, focuses mainly on literacy in Khmer and, as such, resembles more closely a LOTE program, however, differing in that it is taught only to background speakers.

So in a sense the most salient feature of the Khmer-English program has been change, that is, change in the student population, change in the pedagogical methodology, and change in the funding structure. The staff of the program and of the school have been considerably resilient in weathering these changes by continually adapting to them.

In part, the effectiveness of the Khmer program has been due to the considerable publicity continually afforded it. The Khmer-English program has maintained a very high profile throughout its existence. It has been the focus of considerable research and has been presented as a model of good language teaching practice at numerous national conferences and within professional development programs and has frequently appeared in the press. This high profile has, no doubt, been important in gaining it continued funding.

Another feature demonstrated by the Khmer-English program that has enabled its survival has been its capacity to change and for this change in direction to be supported at the school and departmental levels. Beginning as an ESL transition strategy, the program changed to a bilingual program to accommodate parents' requests for their children to be literate in Khmer as well as English, this change was also necessitated by funding criteria: after two-three years the students within the program did not actually qualify for Stage 2 ESL funding.

Finally, this program's success is attributable to a strong parent support group and a dedicated teacher as well as the fact that this language is still widely spoken in the Cambodian community and in each child's home, hence it is taught only to background speakers.

Materials and resources

Stakeholders need to have investigated the availability of resources or personnel to develop such resources well before the instigation of the program. Where resources are needed to be developed, class plans must be prepared well in advance and materials acquired. Resource development has been one of the major preoccupations of the Khmer-English program. Since so little Khmer material was available, and what was available was unsuitable, most materials had to be adapted from existing English texts. This was done by translating the text and pasting the Khmer script over the top of the English text in existing Big Books and a range of other fiction and reference reading materials. Other materials preparation, for majority languages, might include ordering texts from overseas or the purchasing of a computer and software to type in another script.

The Khmer-English program also employed the services of a specialist reading teacher who adapted The Vital Years Reading Program for the program.

With respect to the Khmer-English program, the need to develop most of the classroom materials and resources has placed a considerable strain on the staff throughout the program. In fact, it was initially felt that the amount of time spent on developing materials in the first year alone warranted the continuation of the program (Ministry of Education 1993:10).

Initial consultation process

Because the Khmer-English program was initially experimental considerable consultation was necessary before the implementation of any language maintenance program. When interviewed, the former Project Officer for the program identified the consultation process as the most important aspect in establishing a language maintenance program. For the Khmer-English program this involved:

- Identifying the population (in this case Khmer-speaking students rather than Vietnamese-speaking students since the latter had greater access to existing Intensive Language Centres than the Cambodian students) (Ministry of Education 1993:3)
- Identifying a suitable school, one which was accessible to the main immigrant group, had a supportive parent group, was conducive to the creation of a cross-cultural environment (i.e. it already supported ethnic diversity) and had the support of principal and staff (op cit)

Because language maintenance programs involve an existing community of speakers, consultation with that group was mandatory. At School K a Steering Committee of parents and Ministry representatives was formed as well as a School-Based Committee. A Departmental Project Officer and a Primary ESL Education Officer attended meetings of both these groups. The Steering Committee established the initial objectives, the relative weighting of instruction in the two languages and met each month to provide a forum for discussing the progress of the program. The School-Based Committee dealt with issues relating to transport (of students from other suburbs), programming, timetabling and discipline. This committee also provided liaison between the program and members of the school community not directly involved in the program (Ministry of Education 1993:7).

Processes of investigation was also set in place whereby other similar programs in WA and in several Victorian schools were visited by the Project Officer. The Project Officer also informed parents, negotiated with the school and the Ministry and attended to the financial matters and monitored expenditure of the allocated budget. In fact the Project Officer's support was exceptional in that she also "monitored the instructional program, offering ideas and assistance at the classroom level" (Ministry of Education 1993:6).

Program life-cycle

Stakeholders for each program type need to be made aware of explicit planning objectives and these objectives need to address the life cycle of the program. Within these objectives should be plans for further staff training and plans for the discontinuation of the program if the nature of the student population should change. One of the major problems confronted by the Khmer-English program was the lack of explicit commitment to further funding. As pointed out in interviews recorded by Barrett-Pugh et al (1996) "although research is being carried out on the program and that several high ranking officials from the State Education Department and from overseas have been shown the program, there is still no guarantee of continued funding..... they have all said how wonderful it is and yet we don't know from one year to the next whether we'll still be here" (op cit:65). This uncertainty was clearly expressed by the Khmer teacher in these interviews:

> *I don't know whether there's a program next year. Nobody's told me. There has always been a problem. Sue had to prepare submissions every year for the first four years. Can't plan, can't assure parents the program will continue, you've got to live in faith. I never had anything in writing. I don't have any guarantees to plan my future (Barrett-Pugh 1996:65)*

Teacher appointment and training

Advertisements for suitably qualified staff also need to be set in place and arrangements made for interviews and the appointment according to Ministry policy (op cit:7). At School K the teachers selected for the program had come from different backgrounds: the Khmer teacher was originally trained as a high school teacher and had had some experience with ESL programs as a bilingual aide. The ESL teacher had had experience with teaching Aboriginal students. The fact that the ESL teacher was not a qualified ESL trained teacher invited some criticism from local experts in this area. Both teachers were provided with four days of professional development and visited several Intensive Language Centres and First Steps programs in WA and in Melbourne (op cit). A day of professional development was also organised for other staff in the school to enable them to become familiar with the program. The agenda for the day covered topics such as bilingualism and cultural awareness and staff were invited to observe the project in action. Unfortunately this day of professional development did not occur at the very commencement of the program so did not allay some initial concerns that developed (Ministry of Education 1993:8). However, in spite of this intensive training schedule for establishing the program, very little has been done to ensure the availability of future trained staff if the program is to continue beyond the interest or energy level of the current teacher. Most of the people involved with the initial establishing of the program have moved to other areas within the Department of Education or to other areas of the education sector.

Contextual variables at the Khmer-English Bilingual Project at School K

Following is a summary of the main contextual variables as discussed above. A student population of background speakers in Khmer and an immigrant parent population, which relies on both the children's acquisition of English and their retention of Khmer:

- a small total school population.
- a minority language.
- a changing student population.
- a changing program structure.
- changing funding procedures.
- changing student motivation.

SALIENT THEMES

1 The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues.

The Khmer-English program, although initially linked to the notion of transition to English mainstream competence, soon, i.e., within the first year of its existence, became a bilingual program with parents eager for their children to have literacy skills in Khmer and English. Parents saw the program as able to provide the mother tongue literacy skills that they themselves were unable to provide. Having come from peasant farming backgrounds before spending many years in Thai refugee camps, several parents acknowledged that they do not have the skills to promote Khmer literacy in their children. They therefore see themselves as a special case deserving of this government support. Parents also saw the program as enabling their children to be sufficiently literate in English to find better employment than they have found. Although Australia offers peace and security, parents were very aware that in terms of their employment as strawberry or flower pickers, they had not progressed very far from rice farming. They were very keen for their children not to be farmers.

In this respect, the Khmer teacher has been keen that the students become familiar with Cambodian culture as well as its language. She has developed stories based on Cambodian symbols, for example, the rabbit as a lucky animal, which the children are able to tell their parents thus enabling them "to rediscover their culture through their children" (Barrett-Pugh 1996:60).

The Khmer/English program has had certain "inherent tensions" (Ministry of Education 1993:9) whereby the objectives of the maintenance of the old culture and the acceptance of the new might be seen as conflicting. Bilingualism itself requires L1 language competence which supports that cultural identity, however the importance of the L2 and the mainstream culture is sometimes overwhelming in that it provides the "cultural capital" (op cit: 15) valued in the broader school and social context. As a result the LI and its culture tend to become unique and preserved for particular socio-linguistic functions. Earlier research (Oliver & Rochecouste 1997) has shown that students are particularly aware of their two languages and when to use each one of them. They speak only Khmer to their parents and either English or Khmer to siblings and English to friends outside the family (op cit: 230). For example, they see Khmer as inappropriate when speaking to children who are not friends or when in the playground. They also differentiated between language use in mainstream and Khmer classes, fearing that mainstream teachers would see the use of Khmer in their classes in a negative light (op cit: 231).

2 In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology

The Khmer program has been extremely dependent on the enthusiasm and skills of the Khmer teacher. However the fact that there is only one teacher, who would now like to change her career path, places the program in jeopardy. There has been no effort to ensure the longevity of the program by training other teachers so the current teacher's reduced hours means that the program must also be reduced.

The changing nature of the Khmer/English program has also meant a continually evolving methodology. The initial objective of requiring students to have reached a level of English enabling them to enter mainstream classes within one year placed considerable pressure on the teachers and initially "there was a good deal of uncertainty and confusion about both the objectives of the instructional program and about the curriculum" (Ministry of Education 1993:20). This objective required an unequal proportioning of the language instruction. Students were to begin with about 70% of instruction in Khmer with instruction in the L2 gradually increasing. This meant that the Khmer teacher would have to shoulder most of the teaching load and, as it turned out, this had to be done with limited availability of curriculum materials in Khmer. The L2 teacher also felt uncomfortable about the distribution of teaching, having to wait until the students were at a point where she would teach the greater part of the time. The change to a bilingual program therefore relieved many of these stresses but added the stress of responding to the objective of achieving bilingualism within the one year of initial funding (Ministry of Education 1993:10).

Initially the two teachers were very nervous of each other and extremely anxious about the pressure to raise students to mainstream English proficiency within one year. "They were not given any time to get to know each other or to discuss the aims of the program together" (Barrett-Pugh 1996:63). Fortunately, they were supported by the School Committee which was set up by a teacher not involved in the program but who saw that support for the teachers was required in the face of some resistance and a need also for a means to integrate the program into the school as a whole and to help with various peripheral problems, since they were "working so hard to get the program working". The role of the School Committee has been described above. The teachers were also helped considerably by the Consultant reading expert who provided much classroom direction and support. Two teachers in the school were extremely negative about the project. This problem was addressed by the principal who suggested that they change their attitudes or leave the school. These two teachers subsequently moved to other schools. The English/ESL teacher also had concerns in the beginning but was well trained in First Steps so could see the positive results and became a strong proponent. The Project Officer of the time also reported that there were several people even in Head Office who took some convincing about the benefits of the program.

The Department of course wanted to demonstrate quantifiable success so the draft form of the *Student Outcome Statements* was used to assess the students. In this way the students were shown to not only perform at the appropriate mainstream level but to do so in two languages.

3 Learner use of the target language inside and outside the classroom

Because many of the Cambodian parents have very poor English language skills, language learners in this program will have extensive use of the L1 in the home. However, as pointed out above, students frequently spoke to their siblings in English, even when at home and were reluctant to use their L1 in the playground or in mainstream classes. They also frequently assist their parents as interpreters of the L2. Indeed parents have reported that even very young students have been able to negotiate with government departments, such as Homeswest, on behalf of their parents. One student accompanies his mother to TAFE evening classes translating in her flower-arranging course. The following table demonstrates the number of students who interpret for their parents and the places where this is done:

Figure 1: Situations in which Year 6/7 students interpret for their parents

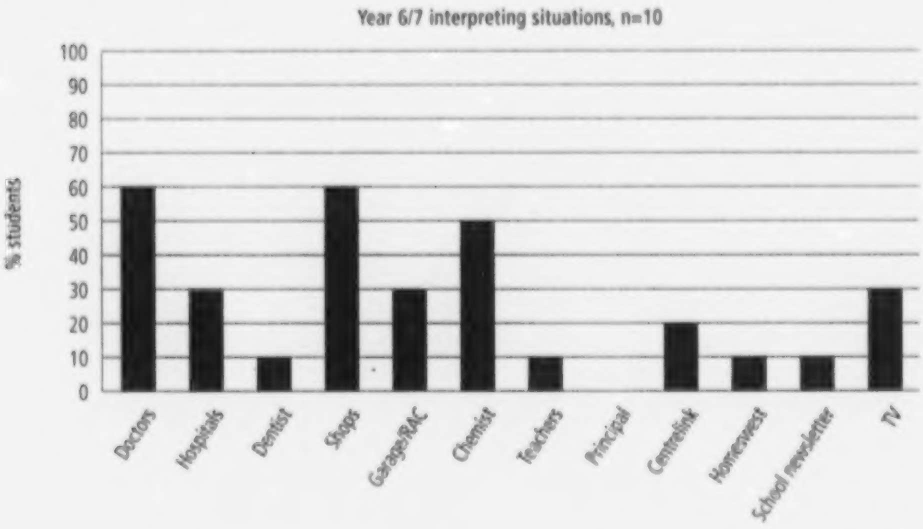
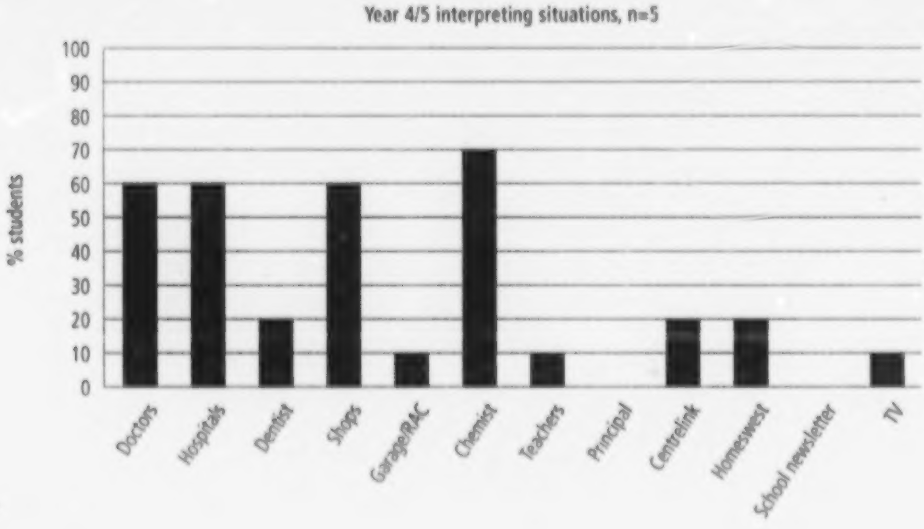


Figure 2: Situations in which Year 6/7 students interpret for their parents



Interestingly, very few students indicated that they helped their parents to fill in forms or provide other types of assistance with written English. Only 10% of Year 6/7s assisted with Centrelink documentation, and 20% indicated that they helped with questionnaires from the school. One Year 4/5 students said that he helped with Homeswest documentation.

4 Social conservatism, separation and parochialism

Some criticism of the Khmer program has been that it has separated the Cambodian students from the wider school population. Indeed, that the Khmer classes did mould the Cambodian students into a "close-knit" group was evidenced from their reluctance to join mainstream classes "because some of the other kids they know are quite rough" (Barrett-Pugh et al 1996:64). Staff did, however, respond to this by pairing Cambodian and non-Cambodian students in the mainstream classes but there remained a reluctance on their part to ask questions because they did not want to appear silly (op cit). Other strategies implemented to integrate the students more were their inclusion in the school's fitness program, a "buddy system" whereby "they spent a few minutes each day engaged in one-to-one interaction, usually to read a story to each other and discuss the stories" (Ministry of Education 1993:13), and one afternoon spent each week with mainstream Year Ones in science and cooking classes (op cit).

5 Vulnerability of programs due to population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries

The Khmer/English program has shown itself to be particularly vulnerable to population movements that have resulted in reducing numbers of students. As some of these immigrant families have become more successful they have sought to purchase their own homes in other less expensive areas than that of the school, which has now been developed with several expensive housing estates. Moreover, because many parents are from rural backgrounds and have limited English language skills, they are more likely to find work on the outskirts of the city in market gardens picking flowers or strawberries. The long hours of such work and the distance needed to travel to the place of work has meant that some families have chosen to move closer to their employment and as a result have had to take their children away from the school.

The Khmer-English program has suffered from considerable funding vagaries. It began with a Commonwealth (DEET) grant of $120,000. This sum was expected to fund two full time teacher salaries, the development of materials and the employment of consultants. In the first year of operation the program came in under budget with $10,000 left over and negotiations took place with the government to keep this money for further materials development and to run the program into a second year since it had been seen as extremely successful.

In second year the State Department of Education picked the salary component up with the LOTE branch funding the Khmer teacher's salary and the ESL branch that of the English/ESL teacher.

ESL funding was justified by the students qualifying for Stage 2 ESL support funding. However, after some time, some of the students were well outside the criteria for this funding which necessitated seeking different funding, i.e., funding in terms of LOTE. Today the program is managed as part of the LOTE section within the Education Department of Western Australia.

A major criticism of the program has been that there was no clear planning in relation to its longevity and that it has been allowed to drift along with no clear long term funding objectives. This has taken a considerable toll on those involved with the program since they have never been sure of their funding from one year to the next (Barrett-Pugh 1996:65). Nor has there been any provision in terms of training further staff. This becomes an issue when the only qualified Khmer teacher wishes to change her career path.

Whether the continued uncertainty about the program is simply the result of inexplicably articulated plans is not clear. During an interview with the Education Department Co-ordinator for LOTE programs, it was acknowledged that although the original motivation for the Khmer program, i.e. to assist students to develop skills in English, no longer applied to the same extent, the program does 'tick over nicely' thanks to the motivation and skills of the Khmer teacher. The Department sees that the community's continued support for the program and the positive outcomes of the students are good reasons to maintain departmental support. Although the Khmer students 'have nowhere to go' in that Khmer is not offered at high school, they can now also learn French at School K that is offered at the local high school. Up until the end of 1998, the Khmer program actually had more than the usual allocation of funding under the LOTE formula ,i.e .they had one full time teacher and one aide. In 1999, the teacher is part-time (3 days) and the aide is only employed on Fridays.

6 Organisational issues (timetabling, placement and streaming, and parental involvement)

The continual evolvement of the Khmer-English program has resulted in frequent changes in timetabling. The program commenced in 1992 as a transition program concentrating on enhancing the Khmer speaking and listening skills of 19 Year 1 students in order to assist their transition to English and mainstream classes. However, the Steering Committee of parents asked that the program be extended to include reading and writing in Khmer. In 1995 in Khmer second language class was also available into the Year 3 mainstream class. In this class, Cambodian students often acted as tutors for their English-speaking contemporaries. In addition to this, further After-school classes were run, initially on Saturday mornings and then on Friday afternoons, for those not having had the benefit of the Bilingual Program (i.e., Years 6 and 7 and High School students). These classes are no longer offered.

In 1995 the program was available to Years 1 to 4. Those in Years 1 and 2 had seven to eight hours of Khmer instruction per week and those in Years 3 and 4 received five hours per week. When the Year 1 and 2 students were not in the Khmer class they were instructed by an ESL teacher. The Khmer instruction was extended to include higher year levels as the students moved through the school. Since July 1996, however, Khmer classes have been cut to three hours per week but made available to all year levels.

In 1999 the Khmer teacher reduced her hours to three days per week. This has meant that the program is further reduced to three hours each for a combined Year 4/5 group, a Year 6/7 group and a Year 2/3 group. The reduced time spent in the school also means less time to prepare with other teachers' simultaneous teaching areas.

The program was originally based on an immersion model with content being taught in Khmer, for example in 1995, Year 3 students were taught Social Studies, Science and Writing in Khmer and Year 4 students just Social Studies and Writing. This has required considerable integration and consultation with mainstream teachers, a practice that is no longer available. The program therefore now concentrates on the acquisition of adequate literacy skills in Khmer and focuses on the reading and writing, and to a lesser extent on speaking. So now the program has more resemblance to a LOTE program with background speakers, than to a Bilingual or Immersion program *per se*.

The extension of the program to further middle and upper year levels within the school placed further demands on the system in terms of liaison with more and more teachers to discuss class content and objectives and to plan appropriate Khmer lessons to complement these content areas. This meant that more non-teaching time had to be allocated to the Khmer teacher but also resulted in less Khmer teaching time (Barrett-Pugh 1996:67). A further consequence of this increased workload was a lessening in the time available to communicate students' progress to parents. This is turn resulted in parents questioning the value of the program and raising concerns about their children's opportunities to learn English (op cit:68). Furthermore as parents obtain jobs and become more involved in full-time work commitments they have had less time to come to the school to discuss their children's progress with the Khmer teacher and some parents have expressed a concern that learning two languages is confusing the children (op cit).

It was also intended that the Khmer program help promote bilingual/bicultural identity (Cambodian and Australian) and this continues to be seen as a worthwhile reason for the program. The program has provided a bridge for the families of these students within the mainstream English-speaking Australian community and therefore the department would support it until the community no longer wants it. It was also noted that the impact of the principal in the school with regard to LOTE programs is fundamental and in the case of the Khmer program, this support has been more than provided by the various principals at School K during the course of the program.

The program remains strongly supported by a core group of parents. Teachers at the school are very proactive in inviting the Cambodian parents to assemblies and other functions. Several parents who frequently bring Cambodian dishes to school functions appear, on observation, very relaxed in the school environment and are made most welcome by teachers.

7 Student attitudes and student motivation issues as well as student versus parental notions and senses of identity

Change is also evident in the student motivation. Initially the students depended heavily on the content provided in the Khmer class to provide transition to the English classes. Students were then provided with instruction based on promoting bilingualism. One of the main criticisms of this aspect of the program has been the fact that, unlike genuine immersion programs, students learn again in Khmer what they have learned in English, rather than building on existing knowledge, all be it, learned in a different language. As a result, they can only progress at half the rate of students in mainstream education.

In more recent years students see the program as a Khmer language class, in addition to their mainstream content areas. Their motivation to excel at Khmer is affected considerably by the family commitment. This means that a normal wide range of achievement is reflected in these classes with some children more in the habit of "going fishing with their fathers" than doing homework.

At the beginning of this year provision was made for the Khmer teacher to continue the 1998 Year 7 students' Khmer language classes by it being taught at the high school by the teacher. As a result, the Khmer teacher visited the high school on one occasion and taught one lesson. There seems to have been some sort of resistance from the students in relation to this as they were required to give up their other LOTE (Indonesian) to attend Khmer classes. The Khmer teacher has since not returned as being only three days per week this cut too much into the primary level program. She would like the secondary students to come back to the primary school for their classes but this also raises issues of travel and insurance. In view of all these problems the secondary level classes have not got off the ground.

In fact, interviews with the graduating class have shown them to be very keen to learn more languages, each one looking forward to high school for this very reason. It might not be surprising therefore that this group resisted Khmer instruction when it was seen to replace their new second language class.

The head of the language department at the high school, noted in her interview that some of the Cambodian students are doing very well at Indonesian and are achieving at very high levels while others do not appear to be trying so hard, even to the point of disciplinary problems which need to be discussed with the parents. Overall she feels that the range of skills reflects that of a similar non-Cambodian student population.

Research by Oliver & Rochecouste (1997) and by Barrett-Pugh et al (1996) has demonstrated that the students in the bilingual program had developed considerable meta-linguistic awareness. This was expressed in their recognition of the various communicative situations where it was or was not appropriate to use either of their languages; in the learning strategies that they developed to overcome difficulties in each language (Oliver & Rochecouste 1997:228-229); their ability to observe differences between their two languages; and observations made about their younger siblings' acquisition of both Khmer and English (Barrett-Pugh 1996:163-164).

8 Issues of home language and school (English) language development

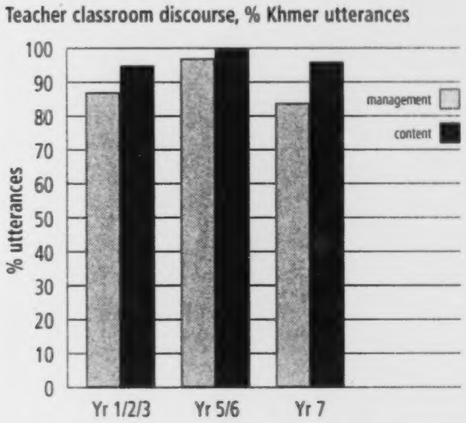
The issue of home language and the development of English language skills were one of the initial concerns underlying the establishment of the Khmer-English program. This motivation came from teachers' observation that the English language skills of the large proportion of students from Cambodian (Khmer-speaking) families appeared to 'plateau' at Year 4. Staff hoped that, by providing at least 50% of these students' education in their home language, their linguistic competence would be sufficiently expanded to also improve their acquisition of English.

Part of the impetus for the parents' request for change of direction (i.e., to include reading and writing in Khmer) also came from their observation that communication was breaking down within some family units because of the children's lack of Khmer language. In addition, a lack of self-esteem had been observed among older Cambodian children who were now struggling with the learning demands of high school. The program therefore also aimed to raise the self-esteem of this younger group of students.

Interviews by Oliver & Rochecouste (1997) demonstrated that teachers were very aware of the importance of a student's home language and home life in their learning (op cit:220). However, the issue of home language and the role of English has caused some underlying tensions, and indeed some very early open resistance, within the school with some teachers indicating concerns that Khmer is being promoted to the detriment of English language development, and further, that Cambodian students are actually missing out on some parts of the curriculum. It appears then that some teachers have not seen the importance of the first language for developing linguistic competence in the second or subsequent languages and for learning in general. The impact of these attitudes has been realised in subtle time-tabling issues with extra-curricular and other activities sometimes being scheduled during the Khmer class times.

In 1998, data was collected on the use of Khmer and English in classroom discourse. In the figures below these data are presented as a percentage of the teacher's utterances relating to either content or class management, which were in Khmer. Similarly Khmer language content-related and non-content related utterances by students are also presented:

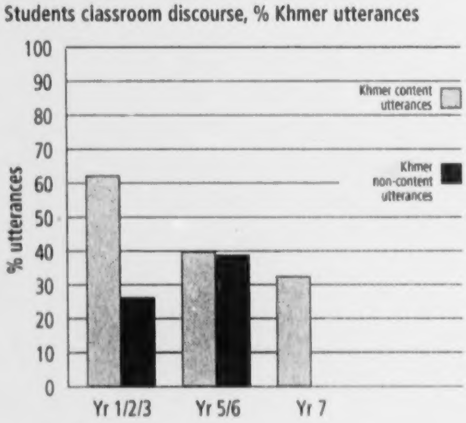
Figure 3: Teacher classroom discourse (Khmer use)



The above figure shows the percentage of classroom discourse (involving class management and content) carried out in Khmer during a one hour observation period, excluding reading and singing. It can be seen that the proportion of Khmer is slightly higher for content (language) instruction than for classroom management discourse for all year levels. However it is important to note that the teacher's Khmer speech contained numerous English discourse markers, e.g., *Okay, Next one, Last one* (of spelling list), *Quickly, Ssh,* etc.

Observation also included the student classroom discourse that was content-related or non-content related (excluding reading, singing and choral responses):

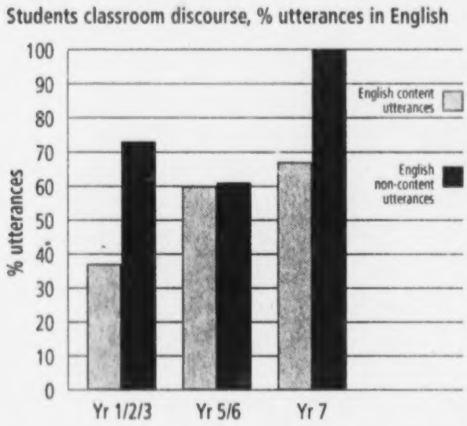
Figure 4: Student classroom discourse (Khmer use)



Here there was considerably lower use of Khmer for content utterances (63% for Years 1/2/3, 39% for Years 5/6 and 33% for Year 7s). But even less Khmer was used by the Year 1/2/3 students when their utterances did not relate to the content of the class (language), constituting 27% of these utterances and for Year 7s who exhibited no use of Khmer in non-content related utterances. Year 5/6s had quite an equal distribution of Khmer usage in the two utterance types (40% and 39%).

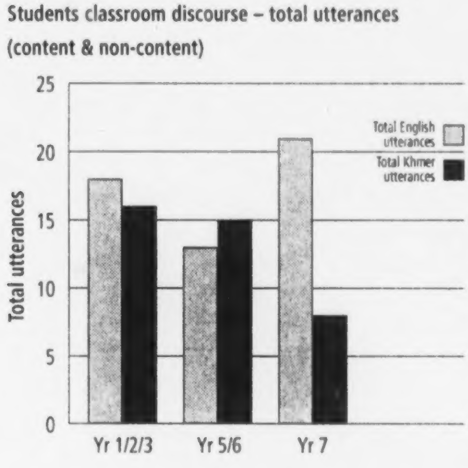
The following figure of English use in content and non-content related utterances demonstrates the increased use of English for the Year 1/2/3 and Year 7 groups more clearly:

Figure 5: Student classroom discourse


Students classroom discourse, % utterances in English

The following figure demonstrates the language use in total utterances. It can be seen that English is the most predominant in the classroom discourse of the Year 7 group and the least predominant in the Year 5/6 group:

Figure 6: Student classroom discourse (total Khmer and English)


Students classroom discourse – total utterances (content & non-content)

EVALUATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Appropriate and reliable assessment was a concern for teachers in the Khmer-English program from the beginning. Initially assessment was carried out through observation and individual progress charts however teachers were still concerned, at the end of the first year, that tests were needed that could be "regarded as sufficiently 'objective' and therefore legitimate in the eyes of others. At the same time, they realised that standard psychometric tests would be inappropriate" (Ministry of Education 1993:18). However, with the new *National Curricula* and the (WA) *Student Outcome Statements*, much broader assessment criteria could be generated by the teacher and applied in the course of his/her daily practice (e.g., the observation of oral skills). A draft of these statements, then called *Outcome statements for Oral Language and Reading* were seen to provide an effective means to assess the competencies of Year 1 students. The results of the assessment using the outcome statements showed "that most students have achieved the outcomes considered appropriate for their peers and that some have progressed beyond this level" (Ministry of Education 1993:19), moreover, "all but three children were considered to have achieved a high level of success in both Khmer and English" (op cit)

The *First Steps Writing Continuum* have also been developed for and applied to students in the Khmer-English program. This has been extensively reported in Barrett-Pugh et al (1996). These investigators found that, with regard to the *Oral Continuum*, the Khmer student population (Years 1-4) could be placed into three general stages of development:

- Children who were capable in both languages of most of the indicators in Phase 3 and were beginning to acquire some of the indicators in Phase 4.
- Children who were capable in both

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languages of most of the indicators in Phases 3 & 4 and were beginning to add a few of the indicators in Phase 5.

- Children who were capable in both languages of almost all the indicators up to and including Phase 4 and were developing several of the indicators of Phase 5 and beyond. (op cit:98)

Barrett-Pugh et al were therefore able to make the following conclusions about the Cambodian students' oral language development:

- There was a "fairly parallel level of fluency in both Khmer and English"
- There was clear development "from one year to the next"
- The developmental gain was clearest among the students who were regarded as high achievers and some who were judged to be average achievers.
- The oral language development of low achievers was less developed with one exception
- There was some evidence of gender difference with girls exhibiting greater fluency (Barrett-Pugh 1996:98-99).

Assessment according to the *First Steps Writing Developmental Continuum* provided evidence of four separate groups:

- Children who demonstrated in both languages most of the key indicators in Phase 2 *Experimental Writing*.
- Children who demonstrated in both languages most of the key indicators on Phase 2 *Experimental Writing* and were beginning to demonstrate some of the indicators on Phase 3 *Early Writing*
- Children who demonstrated in both languages most of the key indicators in Phase 3 *Early Writing* and were beginning to demonstrate some of the indicators in Phase 4 *Conventional Writing*
- Children who demonstrated in both languages most of the key indicators on Phase 4 *Conventional Writing* and were beginning to demonstrate some indicators on Phase 5 *Proficient Writing*.

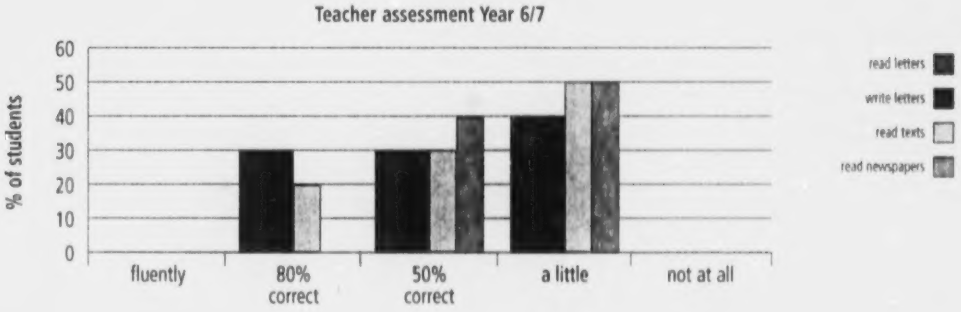
Barrett-Pugh et al also administered *the Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* (Clay 1993) to all Year 1 students (n=19) in 1995. Three observations were then considered appropriate for the Khmer student sub-population (n=5) and were subsequently translated into Khmer, these included: Word Recognition, Writing vocabulary and Concepts about Print. With the *Observation Survey* in English "Cambodian children achieved above average scores for the Year 1 children at their school on Letter Identification, Word Recognition (both word lists), Writing vocabulary and Hearing Sounds in Words. The only measure on which they scored as a group below the mean was on Concepts about Print, with a score of 15/24, compared to the whole group mean score of 16." (op cit: 153). However the students scored the same or higher results for the Concepts about Print test in Khmer. Overall the students showed "fairly similar results for the word tests in the two languages" (op cit:156).

In order to gain a broad estimate of the Khmer language students' skills in 1999, the Khmer teacher was requested to assess the general fluency of the students in a range of different literacy tasks through the following questions (see also Appendix 1):

- Can the student read letters from relatives in Cambodia?
- Can the student write letters to relatives in Cambodia?
- Can the student read texts translated into Khmer?
- Does the student read books or newspapers from Cambodia?

Figure 7 demonstrates the range of abilities.

Figure 7: Teacher's assessment of literacy skills of Year 6/7 students



As demonstrated in the above figure, the students as a group have slightly better reading skills than writing skills and there were no students judged as totally fluent nor unable to carry out any literacy tasks in Khmer at all.

The teacher was also asked to assess the students' spontaneous use of Khmer in the classroom context, for example:

- Does the student speak spontaneously to the teacher in Khmer?
- How often does the student use Khmer for classroom discourse with other students?
- How often can the student carry out teacher requests given in Khmer? (See also Appendix 1).

Figure 8 on this page demonstrates these results.

This data show that responses to the teacher are in Khmer 50% of the time and interaction between students is in Khmer 50% of the time, except for one student who apparently never speaks Khmer to other Khmer-speaking students. Another student, however, always speaks Khmer to her peers in the classroom. A higher percentage of students always respond to the teacher's requests in Khmer.

The Khmer teacher was asked to record whether each student tended to reply to her using complete sentences or one or two words in Khmer. Some 30% of the 6/7 class responded to her in complete sentences, with 70% using one or two word responses.

The teacher was also asked to make a rough judgement on the content of the spontaneous use of Khmer when students addressed her. In this case 90% of students' responses contained 80% Khmer with only 10% or one student's spontaneous utterances containing a mix of Khmer and English.

Similar assessment was carried out for the Year 4/5 class see figure 9 on the following page.

Figure 8: Teacher assessment of classroom discourse 6/7

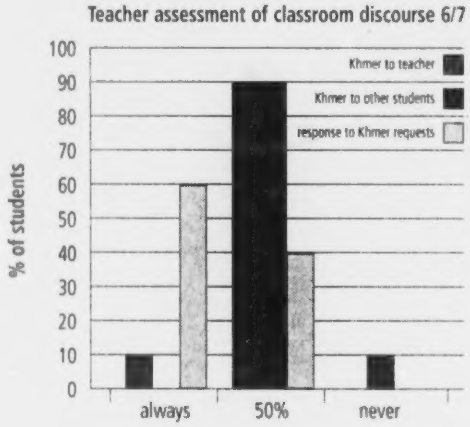
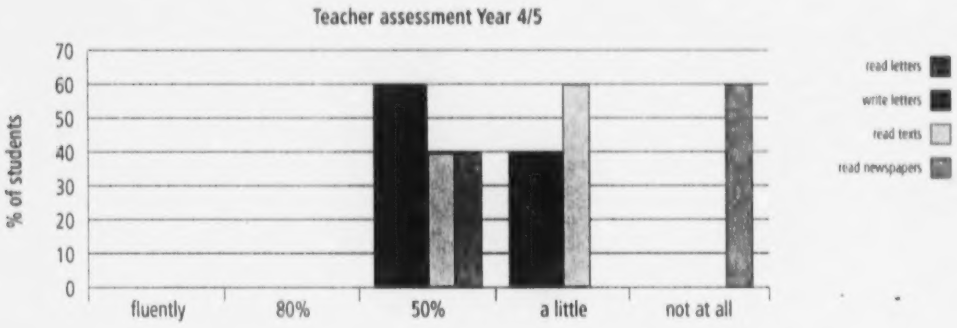
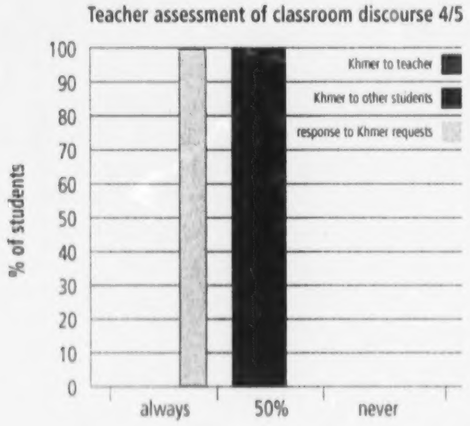


Figure 9: Teacher's assessment of literacy skills of Year 4/5 students



As might be expected, the Year 4/5 student group demonstrate lower overall proficiency in the identified literacy tasks with, not surprisingly, little experience of reading newspapers.

Figure10: Teacher assessment of classroom discourse Year 4/5



The Year 4/5 group also exhibit more similar behaviour in their use of Khmer with the teacher and with peers and consistency in terms of responding to the teacher's requests in Khmer.

The Khmer teacher also recorded whether each student tended to reply to her using complete sentences or one or two words in Khmer. Some 40% of the 4/5 class responded to her in complete sentences, with 60% using one or two word responses.

The teacher's rough judgement on the content of the spontaneous use of Khmer when students addressed her showed 100% of students' responses containing 80% Khmer showing more consistent use of Khmer than the Year 6/7 group.

Students were also requested to assess themselves using a 5 point Leikert Scale on the same tasks plus that of understanding Khmer language videos:

Figure 11 on the following page shows that Year 6/7s tend to place themselves in the middle of the range or lower for the reading and writing skills.

The Year 4/5 self-assessment, see figure 12, shows a greater concentration of skills in the higher proficiency levels.

Figure 11: Student self-assessment of literacy skills Years 6/7

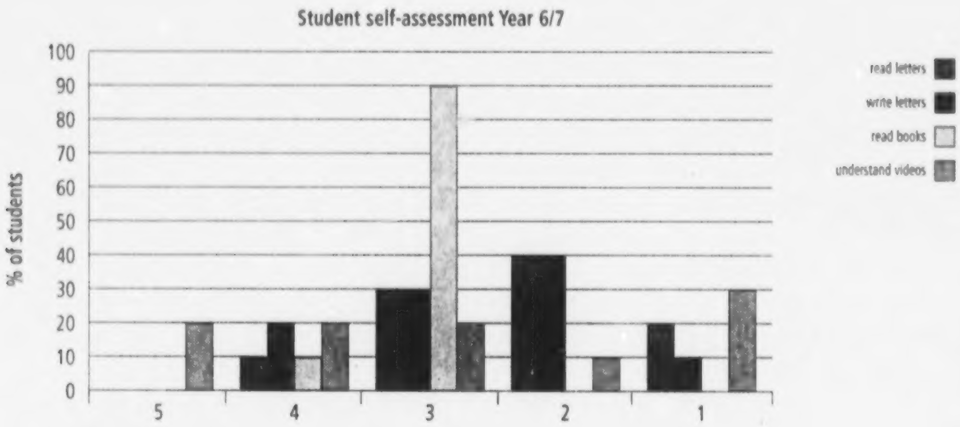
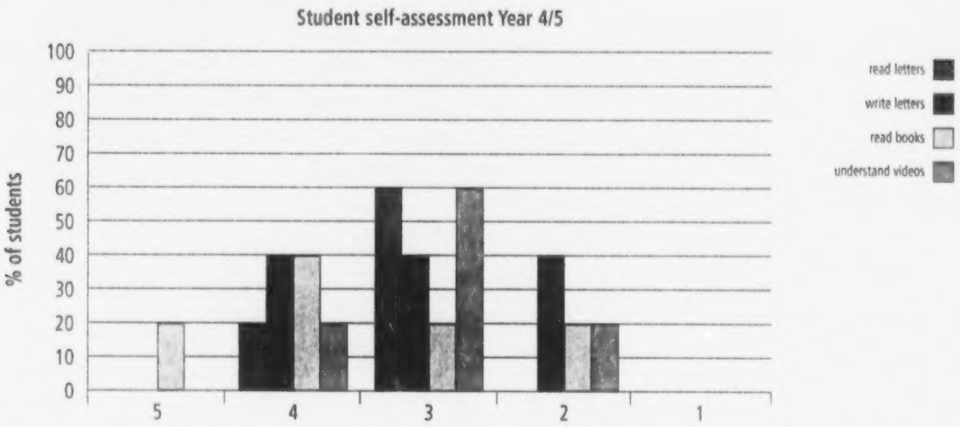


Figure 12: Student self-assessment of literacy skills Years 4/5



SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Linguistic achievements

Over time the initial objective of successful acquisition of English language skills has been replaced by one of adequate literacy skills in Khmer. This has meant a change from an ESL transition program to a bilingual immersion style to a LOTE style of program and assessment no longer in terms of improvement in English language but in terms of proficiency in Khmer. Considerable problems arise with this change in focus. Khmer is not a majority language and resources for its teaching are not widely available. Most of those developed for this program have been prepared by the teacher and her two aides. Moreover any assessment is hampered by the fact that there are no standardised tests of proficiency. This means that evaluation of students' linguistic performance is limited to matching their success in rendering correct that which has been taught in the class in test sessions (e.g. dictation, spelling tests, comprehension exercises and free writing). Another method is to use and develop existing assessment frameworks, eg. First Steps, Student Outcome Statements.

Socio-cultural achievements

The socio-cultural evaluation of the program might be measured in terms of the integration of Khmer students into the school and broader Australian social contexts and this appears to have been extremely successful especially in the upper primary levels, as Oliver & Rochecouste observed in their 1997 teacher interviews: "Australian culture... surrounds them and is implicit in their living and being educated in Australia... Australian culture [is] the norm". (Oliver & Rochecouste 1997:226). Some criticism of the program is that it sets Cambodian students apart as a special group and in this sense works against integration although this issue was addressed during the early stages of the program as described below. Nonetheless, the school rhetoric, evident at assemblies for example, is to pride itself on the multicultural nature of the school.

Another measure of the socio-cultural success of the program might be the skill with which the students are able to act as interpreters for their parents in the broader community. The majority of parents depend on their children acting as interpreters when communicating with government departments (e.g., HomesWest, Centrelink), the RAC, medical doctors, chemists, shops, garage, and evening classes. Criticism of this has been that it disturbs the power relations between parent and child giving then child more power than the parent. When the child acts as interpreter at school, it leads to both parents and teachers being compromised and disempowers any parent who would wish to control their child.

Attitudinal achievements

Evaluation of the attitudinal effects of the program seem to show this population of students to see their languages as mutually exclusive. Oliver & Rochecouste (1997) suggest that this may be a coping strategy used by NESB children in general. The sample of Cambodian children in their study indicated that they were reluctant to use their language with other children in the playground and in teaching situations outside the Khmer language class. They showed that Khmer tended to be reserved for communication other, older Khmer speakers (e.g. family and extended family members). At the same time they indicated that they were quite happy to use English in situations where they would not feel comfortable using Khmer. Teachers interviewed as part of this study showed a general keenness for these students to maintain their mother tongue and tolerance of it being used in their classrooms, but, in spite of this, students indicated that they were reluctant to use it in the mainstream classes (Oliver & Rochecouste 1997:231).

Educational policy questions addressed by this Project:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of different types of language maintenance programs?

What can you expect to achieve from each type of program?

Clearly, from a bilingual program there is an expectation that proficient bilinguals will result. This has been the case for many of the students in the Khmer-English program. However, there remains the overriding dominance of the mainstream language and society with which students will naturally want to identify and which some parents may emphasize as important for gaining success and employment. Thus, an immigrant group will probably have somewhat different expectations of a bilingual program than other parent groups. For immigrant families the bilingual program will ensure the success of their children in the new society and the skill in two languages is heavily linked to L1 maintenance and communication with the family and immigrant community. For this group the L2 has importance for their own and their children's entry into mainstream Australian society and success therein. For monolingual families, the expectations of a bilingual program will differ, being more concerned with the actual bilingualism that they would like to result from the program and the employment opportunities which would result from that skill and from the knowledge of the L2 in the context of its speakers (who are generally not in Australia).

How do you judge which program type is most suitable for a particular situation?

A checklist may provide assistance with these types of decisions. Stakeholders need to identify the type of population they have and the type of language they have in mind to present. Decisions need to be made on the basis of the language type that differentiates between:

Indigenous language		**Community language**	
Language maintenance – issues	Language revival – issues	Majority community language – issues	Minority community language – issues
Student population: • Beginners with parent language models	*Student population:* • Beginners with no language models	*Student population:* • Background speakers & ESB language learners	*Student population:* • background speakers
Personnel: • Existing skilled teachers	*Personnel:* • Training of teachers	*Personnel:* • Existing skilled teachers	*Personnel:* • Training of teachers
Resources: • Resource availability	*Resources:* • Resource development	*Resources:* • Resource availability	*Resources:* • Resource development
Assessment: • Appropriateness of assessment methods • Use of Student Outcome statements	*Assessment:* • Appropriateness of assessment methods • Use of Student Outcome statements	*Assessment:* • Existing assessment methods • Use of Student Outcome statements	*Assessment:* • Development of assessment methods • Use of Student Outcome statements

Where identifying the type of language this matrix provides a pathway to understanding the problems associated with providing a program to teach that type of language.

What can be done to maximise the effectiveness of your language maintenance program?

In part, the effectiveness of the Khmer program has been due to the considerable publicity continually afforded it. The Khmer-English program has maintained a very high profile throughout its existence. It has been the focus of considerable research and has been presented as a model of good language teaching practice at numerous national conferences and within professional development programs and has frequently appeared in the press. This high profile has, no doubt, been important in gaining it continued funding.

Another feature demonstrated by the Khmer-English program that has enabled its survival has been its capacity to change. The changes have been in directions supported at wider school and departmental levels. Beginning as an ESL transition strategy, the program changed to a bilingual program to accommodate parents' requests for their children to be literate in Khmer as well as English, this change was also necessitated by funding criteria: after two-three years the students within the program did not actually qualify for Stage 2 ESL funding.

Finally, this program's success is attributable to a strong parent support group and a dedicated teacher as well as the fact that this language is still widely spoken in the Cambodian community and in each child's home, hence it is taught only to background speakers.

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APPENDIX 1

Teacher Questionnaire

Student's name ____________________

Age ____________________

Class ____________________

1 Can the student read letters from relatives in Cambodia?

☐ Fluently ☐ 80% correct ☐ 50% correct ☐ a little ☐ Not at all

2 Can the student write letters to relatives in Cambodia?

☐ Fluently ☐ 80% correct ☐ 50% correct ☐ a little ☐ Not at all

3 Can the student read texts translated into Khmer?

☐ Fluently ☐ 80% correct ☐ 50% correct ☐ a little ☐ Not at all

4 Does the student read books or newspapers from Cambodia?

☐ Fluently ☐ 80% correct ☐ 50% correct ☐ a little ☐ Not at all

5 When the student replies to the teacher in Khmer, is it a complete sentence in Khmer or is it one or two words in Khmer?

☐ Complete Sentence ☐ One/Two Words

6 Does the student speak spontaneously to the teacher in Khmer?

☐ Always ☐ 50% ☐ never

If so, is the spontaneous use of Khmer in complete sentences, or mixed with English?

☐ Completely Khmer ☐ Mixed 80% Khmer ☐ Mixed 80% Khmer ☐ Mixed 80% Khmer

7 How often does the student use Khmer for classroom discourse with other students?

☐ Always ☐ 50% ☐ never

8 How often can the student carry out teacher requests given in Khmer?

☐ Always ☐ 50% ☐ never

9 Does the student interpret for his/her parents?

☐ Yes ☐ No If YES where?

at the doctor's surgery ☐
at the hospital ☐
at the dentist ☐
at the shops ☐
at the garage ☐
at the chemist ☐
at school with the teachers ☐
at school with the principal ☐
at Centrelink ☐
at Worklink ☐
Other ☐

10 Does the student fill out forms for his/her parents?

☐ Yes ☐ No If YES what sort?

Centrelink ☐
school questionnaires ☐
taxation forms ☐
census forms ☐
Other ☐

Student Questionnaire

Student's name ____________________

Age ____________________

Class ____________________

1 Can you read letters from relatives in Cambodia?

Very well — Not very well

2 Can you write letters to relatives in Cambodia?

Very well — Not very well

3 Can you read books in Khmer?

Very well — Not very well

How often do you read them?

Very often — Not very often

4 Can you understand videos in Khmer?

Very well — Not very well

How often do you watch them?

Very often — Not very often

5 Do you translate for your parents?

Very often — Not very often

Where do you translate for them?

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____

____

____

6 In what other places do you speak Khmer?

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7 Do you use Khmer differently in different places? Eg. At school, at home, with friends

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8 What do your family like about your learning Khmer?

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ITALIAN AND CHINESE IN VICTORIA

Four programs are covered by this site report, two Chinese and two Italian. They are characterised briefly as:

Program	Description
Chinese A	Inner-city primary school, Bilingual P-2, then LOTE
Chinese	Inner city primary school Bilingual P-6
Italian A	Victorian School of languages (DoE) Saturday School(primary/secondary)
Italian B	DoE primary school bilingual program, part funded by COASIT

This site report is presented under three main sub-headings:

1 Background information and contextual variables

2 Descriptive profile of each program and

3 Salient themes

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before proceeding to a description of the programs it is important to provide some background to the sociolinguistic situation of home background learners in Australia.

Italian

Those studies which have been conducted in the Australian context suggest that many background speaker learners of Italian use a non-standard variety or dialect in the home and that their active use of the home language may be quite limited. There is evidence (e.g. Bettoni 1991a, Rubino 1993, Clyne 1994) of an overall shrinking of the language repertoire from a situation of trilingualism (Italian dialect, regional /popular Italian and English) amongst the first generation towards one of bilingualism or even English monolingualism in the second and third (who are those most likely to be studying Italian at school). The reduction is not only quantity of Italian used but also in quality (Bettoni 1991b: 266-267). For many of these students the LOTE classroom will be the best (and in some cases the only) source of standard Italian input. Although those who speak dialect (and particularly those dialects which are linguistically close to standard Italian) may find it somewhat easier than English speakers to understand spoken and written input in the target language, there are other psychosocial and socioeconomic factors associated with dialect use which may work to their disadvantage. Dialects for example are subject to transfers or borrowings from English and to language mixing – a phenomenon that tends to be stigmatised (Bettoni and Gibbons 1990) by both teachers and the speakers themselves. There is also evidence that home maintenance of Italian or Italian dialect[1] may be inversely correlated to educational status. According to Kipp et al. (1995) only 26.1% of census respondents claiming to speak Italian at home have a formal educational qualification.

Chinese

As is the case with Italian, the target language (Mandarin) taught in schools is in many cases not the language spoken at home by Chinese background learners. The home language of many Chinese background language learners may be a dialect (e.g. Cantonese, Hakka, Fukkien) and some dialects are more distant from one other and from Mandarin than is, say, French from other Romance languages like Italian and Spanish. Many dialect speakers moreover may be quite unfamiliar with the taught standard. It has in fact been suggested that the notion of a standard is more a myth that has been perpetrated for political and cultural reasons than an actual norm (Erbaugh 1995). Chinese speakers both within and outside mainland China differ considerably both in the kind of Mandarin they speak and write (if indeed they speak and/or write it at all) and in their levels of competence in this language (Elder 1997). Those from Taiwan, for example, have not yet adopted the simplified Chinese character system.

Some of these differences may be reflected in the teaching programs offered in overseas locations. Furthermore, levels of competence are like to diminish after immigration. Clyne et al. (1997) document in detail some of the difficulties experienced in oral production by speakers of dialects other than Mandarin who have been in Australia for an extended period of time. The performance of background speaker learners at school may also, as was pointed out for Italian, be influenced by the attitudes of the learners themselves to the language variety spoken at home and by those of their teachers. Teacher attitudes to non-standard varieties may also affect judgments of learner competence and these attitudes may be influenced by views that were prevalent in their country of origin at the time of immigration. Mandarin-speaking teachers, for example, may be less tolerant of Cantonese "interference" identifiable in the speech and writing of their students than Cantonese speaking teachers, and these different attitudes are likely to be brought to bear in their teaching and assessment practices.

Data Gathered

The data for this project was gathered from four different sites: each of which provides an example of a particular program type or combination of program types. Data was gathered from a range of stakeholders and using different elicitation procedures. Copies of the relevant questionnaires and interview schedules can be provided on request

School	A	B	C	D
Attendance at planning meetings	–	–	n/a	n/a
Interview with (Vice-) Principal	–	–	–	–
Interview with LOTE teacher	–	–	–	–
Teacher questionnaire	–	–	–	n/a
Curriculum documents and materials	–	–	–	–
Student Questionnaire	–	–	–	–
Parent Questionnaire	–	–	–	–
Case studies	–	–	–	–
Observations	–	–	–	–

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[1] Census data does not make the distinction between dialects and the standard form.

DESCRIPTIVE PROFILES OF EACH PROGRAM

Both schools introduced bilingual programs as far back as 1984.

Program A – Chinese within the mainstream

Program A is offered at an inner city school that is situated near a high-rise housing estate that accommodates many of the recent immigrants and low-income families. It is not unusual to see a surge of immigrants from one particular country at one period of time before they move out to other suburbs and give way to another group of migrants. In recent years, it is the Hakka-speaking East Timorese Chinese who are residing near the school thus giving rise to a high demand for a school which offers intensive Chinese in the curriculum.

Program Type

The program is a bilingual Mandarin-English program offering intensive instructions in both languages to children from Chinese speaking backgrounds. At this school bilingual instruction was until three years ago offered to Prep and Grade 1 children from three different communities: Chinese, Vietnamese and Turkish. Recently however the Turkish program was discontinued due to dwindling enrolments from this immigrant group.

The program was initially conceived of a transition program for migrant children that would allow them to learn all subjects in the key learning areas through the medium of their mother tongue and to develop cognitively without being disadvantaged because of language. At the same time they would be helped to acquire skills in English to enable them to move into the mainstream classes. However, as the mother tongue of the majority of the students in the program is not Mandarin but a variety of Chinese dialects such as Cantonese and Hakka, they are in fact learning a second (or third language), which makes the original idea of transition from first language to second language learning in the lower primary school irrelevant. The program is better described as one in which students learn both languages (Mandarin and English) simultaneously, but is not merely to develop language proficiency but, more importantly, to foster the cognitive development of the students through two languages simultaneously by providing challenging and stimulating activities and experiences.

Program Structure and Content

Until 1997 participation in the Mandarin-English bilingual program was compulsory for the first two years of schooling (P-1) for all children of Chinese background regardless of which language/dialect they spoke at home. In that year the school applied for and received additional funding from the DoE designated for the establishment or expansion of bilingual programs in government schools. These funds were used to extend the Chinese program for a further year (to the end of Grade 2).

Mandarin is used as the medium of instruction across all subject areas (Key Learning Areas) for 10 hours per week (around 50% of class time) and for the remaining hours these Key Learning Areas are taught through English. In the early years of the program Chinese background learners were grouped together in a single class with teaching duties being planned and undertaken jointly by a Chinese and English-speaking teacher. There was however a concern among teachers that this set up created a ghetto effect within the school whereby children were reluctant to move outside their cultural groups or to use English for communication at school. The nature of the local community (i.e. high concentration of same language speakers who are recent immigrants and do not necessarily have a good command of English) is such that video watching, shopping and most other daily communicative interactions inside and outside the home take place in one or other of the immigrant languages represented in the are. This meant that, under the old system, the English teacher was in many cases the sole English model the children had and his/ her input was limited to a few hours per week.

From 1992 the organisational structure of the program was therefore changed in such a way that children were organized into multi-age multi-cultural classes (made up of children from Chinese, Vietnamese, Turkish and other language backgrounds) for the English component of their course (on Monday Tuesday and Wednesday morning) and for the remainder of the week (Wednesday PM, Thursday and Friday) reverted to their language specific (in this case Chinese) groupings for LOTE medium instruction. The benefit of this arrangement was that children needed to use English to communicate with other students. According to one of the teachers at the school who has had a long association of the program, cross cultural friendships occurred as a result of this restructuring and understandings of one another's' cultures improved. The new structure also had an impact on curriculum planning, necessitating close teamwork between largish groups of teachers to ensure continuity of curriculum content across languages and to avoid duplication of teaching effort.

On completion of Grade 2, Chinese background students move out of the bilingual program and into the mainstream English-medium school system, They however retain and further develop their Chinese languages skills in subsequent years through participation in compulsory 3 hour per week language maintenance (hereafter LOTE) program.

Curriculum organization and planning

The year 2/3/4 teachers plan a term's program together at the beginning of each term. 5 teachers are involved and 4 grades:

Year 2/3 (Group 1) Year 2/3(Group 2) Year 3/4 (Group 1) Year 3/4 (Group 2) English (Mon.Tue.Wed.AM)

Year 2/3 (Group 1) Year 2/3(Group 2) Year 3/4 (Group 1) Year 3/4 (Group 2) Chinese (Wed. PM Thu. Fri.)

During the first week of the term specialist teachers take over the teaching roster to allow members of the curriculum planning team to concentrate their efforts on building a common understanding, sharing expertise and facilitating greater integration and or cross fertilization of ideas between two cultures. During the meeting, the team works out the theme and framework for the whole term for Integrated studies, Maths and Language Arts and leave the detail to be worked out during the weekly team briefing session. At this weekly session the teachers commonly refer to first half of the week activities (i.e. those conducted exclusively in English) or second half activities (which for the Grade 2 Chinese background kids will be conducted entirely through Chinese, but for the others will be conducted in English except for their three hours of LOTE maintenance class). The language of instruction is not a determining factor in lesson preparation, since it is assumed that all topics lend themselves equally well to instruction through either language. A topic may be introduced in English with one or two continuing lessons in English then one or two in LOTE and evaluation activity that may be in LOTE or vice versa. The children generally switch easily between languages and the teachers build systematically on concepts learned in either.

The Curriculum Planning team works according to the philosophy that all teachers should share a common understanding of the topics to be taught, the approach and activities to be used

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in both the English and Chinese classes. The difference exists only in the language used to convey concepts and expressions to the students. By consistent exchange and communication among members of the team, teachers can avoid repeating each other activities and choose activities that reinforce each other. The open plan classroom is another means to make teachers aware of what goes on in the other classrooms.

The weekly team meeting therefore provides a very good forum for teachers to voice their practical problems and needs specific to their language and have these addressed by other teachers. The team effort is to ensure that students will not find their learning fragmented simply because subjects are of being taught in two languages but that they are cognitively challenged and developed. For an example of the curriculum planning process with particular reference to Integrated Studies see Appendix 3

Staffing

There are two Chinese teachers at the school, one with responsibility for teaching children in the bilingual program another who teaches both on the bilingual program and the LOTE (limited exposure) program in the upper school. Both are fully qualified in both language and LOTE teaching methodology and have had several years' association with the school. The bilingual teacher took some time off for study in the first part of 1999, and for part of the school week was replaced by a newly trained teacher in her first year of teaching. This made the task of implementing the bilingual and the LOTE program particularly difficult since the teacher needed time to adapt to the culture of the school and the particular demands of the bilingual program. (This teacher, who was employed on a temporary basis only, has now been replaced by another teacher who has many years of experience and was formerly associated with the school).

According to the bilingual coordinator the professional demands on the bilingual teachers are very high. The teacher must not only be proficient in Chinese to a level that parents feel is acceptable, but s/he must also be proficient in English in such a way that she/he can work as part of a team and can articulate his/her concerns to the various team members in order to present a unified and integrated curriculum to the students.

The School has recently had a recent change of Principal, but there is a high level of continuity as far as other school staff are concerned and this has been crucial to the program's success. The bilingual coordinator has a key role in the program that she defines thus:

> *"As Program Coordinator, I have to consider the impact of the program on the global budget, timetabling, staffing, space, resources etc to avoid creating any sources of discontent that may jeopardise staff relationships etc. A great deal of sensitivity and flexibility have to be employed to ensure that the Bilingual Program can coexist with other areas of the school?"*
>
> (Interview May 14th 1999)"

Some of the latent tensions and concerns amongst the staff which the coordinator must "hold at bay" are reflected in responses to the teacher questionnaire (see under Teacher Feedback below).

Resources

Resource materials are prepared for the most part by the bilingual teachers who have to interpret what other team members in the bilingual program are doing and translate or adapt the relevant materials to his/her area of teaching.

Teacher feedback

Below we report findings of a survey of teachers and an interview with one of the bilingual teachers who has been involved with the program for many years. The survey results give some sense of how both the bilingual and LOTE programs are viewed by the school staff and the issues which are a source of concern for some. The interview with the bilingual teacher gives information about her approach to teaching LOTE and the ways in which it has evolved over time.

Teacher interview

Date: 11/5/99 **Interviewer:** Irene Liem

How long have you been teaching Chinese in this School?	About six years.
After all these years, do you find any changes in your approach towards teaching Chinese in a Bilingual Program?	Certainly. I have developed a better understanding of how children learn Chinese in an immersion program and have developed strategies to deal with problems related to learning a difficult language. It is not just a matter of the number of hours of exposure to the language but the input of the teacher into the program.
Can you share some of your experiences and insights with me?	Yes. My views have undergone some significant changes during the last few years, perhaps I can highlight some of them for you. Fundamentally, learning Chinese is very different from learning English which is phonic-based i.e. the sound can relate to both what it represents and how it is written. In Chinese, writing is almost totally independent from how it is spoken as it is script and not sound based. I consider writing as the major hurdle to anyone who wants to move beyond speaking the language. During my first few years of teaching, I was very much against the traditional method of teaching Chinese i.e. rote learning of text, and character writing but I am not so certain that it is of no value to students who are learning to write. Repetitive writing, memorising and copying of model writing can be of some use as students stored into their memory model sentences that they can retrieve and use. However, I would add that it depends on how it is being taught, plain rote learning without helping students to analyse and understand what they are doing may not produce the desired effect. Compared with guiding students' progress in writing, I am more successful with helping my students in acquiring speaking skills. I have learned that even in an immersion class in which the teacher uses 100% the target language, students are not necessarily able to speak the language unless the teacher deliberately creates opportunities for students to respond and use the language. This is particularly applicable to many of our Chinese background students who have hardly any opportunity to speak the target language outside the classroom as they speak dialect at home. I have provided students with the environment in which speaking the target language in class is the "in" thing.
What do you think about teaching children to memorize nursery rhymes, poems etc? Are they useful in anyway?	I teach my students nursery rhymes, as children love to chant. They serve as an incentive for children to learn because it is fun and it is confidence building for children who are excited at their capacity to recite from memory a continuous chunk of words that can impress an audience. But I would avoid over using them because very few children are able to transfer what they learn from these rhymes to writing their own sentences as rhymes are usually not functional – you do not usually express matters that happen or are relevant to you in rhymes unless you are performing.

Do you think that children should concentrate on learning to speak at the beginning stage and delay the learning on writing characters until a later stage?	I felt strongly about that some years ago, and did not push children to commit themselves to writing and memorizing characters. But now I am not sure that I have been doing the right thing as I could see how my students struggle with their writing as they move to a higher grade even if they have mastered listening and speaking skills quite well.
Do you see any value in students learning the pinyin system?	Yes. Not only does it help with the pronunciation of unfamiliar words, it is also very important for their publishing work. They have to know the pinyin of each character before they can use the word processor to type out the characters for selection.
How do you help children to learn and remember characters?	Instead of analysing the radical or phonic part of a character as in traditional teaching, I find that young children learn and remember much faster and retain much more information by the recognition of clusters of words which share a common component. From this common component, a number of other words emerge with just an addition of other strokes. For the children, it is like being a magician, capable of making a number of words out of one. However, because of this approach, students may not write with the correct stroke order as they identify the common component first before adding in the rest of the strokes. According to my opinion, it is more important for children to remember the correct strokes of a character than the correct stroke order, which is why I do not emphasize stroke order at all in my teaching of characters.
Do you think correcting students' mistakes in speaking and written work and providing immediate feedback as helpful?	Some teachers believe that giving students immediate correction when a mistake is spotted as threatening to the self-esteem of the students, but I think otherwise. We need to correct mistakes before they become fossilized. However, feedback has to be given in a positive manner as to encourage students to have the desire to improve themselves.
How do you see the difference between your approach and traditional direct teaching?	I think the most basic difference is our awareness that our students are second language learners (despite their being background learners). As they are not exposed to the target language in their everyday life as to be able to use correctly the language unconsciously, it is important to highlight grammatical structures in our teaching in order to allow second language learners to become structure conscious so that they would be able to know how to express themselves correctly either in speech or in writing. I can see why the textbooks used by the ethnic schools are not particularly useful for second language learners. There is no deliberate breakdown of the language to enable second language learners to learn the language one step at a time. Many students can read, memorize the texts taught by the teacher, but if you ask them to write something on their own, they are at a loss as how to approach it.
What is the direction you are taking now in view of your experiences?	Now, I would push my students to start writing characters and simple sentences as early as possible. I find the approach of using genre-text types a particularly useful tool. Students learn to write a story by first identifying the structural elements that make up a story – how to start a story, how to develop the story and how to end. After that, they should learn to associate phrases, forms, words that are commonly used in a particular phase of the story. I always encourage students to talk about what they want to write first orally and then help them to use the words familiar to them to express them in writing. Students are taught to engage in the drafting process, and to involve their teacher if required. The early literacy program (English) for young children is opening up a new avenue for helping children to begin reading Chinese earlier as well. Students can learn to read if they are provided with the appropriate text and teacher guidance on a regular basis. We are now either trying to get these resources desperately or if unavailable to translate from appropriate English readers. I can see the excitement experienced by children who find that they can read books independently.

Classroom observations

Below we give a summary of classroom observations undertaken in 1998 plus a detailed account of two lessons which took place in 1999: one delivered to Prep/1 students in the intensive bilingual program and another delivered to older children in the limited exposure LOTE program. The observation notes give some indication of the strengths of the bilingual program at this school and the skill with which it is taught as well as the problems which can occur at higher levels when children move back into the regular LOTE program run by a less experienced teacher.

Date: 15/3/99 **Time:** 2:30am -3.30pm **Class observed:** Yr3 **Teacher:** CY **No. of students:** 13

Observer: Irene Liem

Purpose: to obtain an understanding of the LOTE class and to compare its lesson content with the Bilingual class attended by the same group of students in the previous year.

Lesson Content: Theme – colour

Items observed

PRESENTATION AND ORGANISATION

The class was a bit restless, apparently this period was the last one in the day. The teacher took some time to settle the students down . She complained about their misbehaviour but did not implement any disciplinary measure until one of the boys kept disrupting her. She sent him off to stand outside the classroom and then began her lesson. The girls were sitting in front while the boys were sitting at the back paying little attention to the teacher who was showing some flashcards to the class and trying to elicit response from the whole class. Only the girls responded. The teacher then asked students to sit in a circle so that she could see the face of everyone. She showed the flashcards again and asked students to respond one by one. Thereafter she asked them to recite a very simple poem which was familiar to them. Then she turned the class attention and asked them to go to their own desk to do some class work. They were to colour the fish on the worksheet according to the colour represented by the characters underneath each one of them. Upon completion, they were expected to write a sentence saying: *I like ... colour, because ...* . On receiving the worksheet and instructions, the students settled down to do the colouring activity. The girls attended to the task very quickly, but the four boys in the class were not serious about their assignment. In fact, all of them made some mistake in matching the colour with the characters, whereas most of the girls got all items correct.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE

The class was rather noisy and the boys were naughty and uninvolved most of the time. N., the boy who was being sent off kept on shouting aloud,"It is so boring".

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION AND INTERACTIONS

Students played a rather passive role throughout the lesson, they were mostly waiting for the teacher to instruct or to elicit. There was little opportunity for students to interact with each other in the target language in the activity they were asked to do. When they sat in pairs or in small groups, they were talking mainly in English. When some of the students were being interviewed by the researcher in the target language, most of them could still manage to respond promptly.

Comments

I am really surprised to observe that these students who have had 3 years in a bilingual program are learning colour this year. The girls last year were writing stories and now they spent the whole lesson writing a simple sentence. What is happening?

This was the same class of students I observed last year when they were in the year 2 bilingual program. They were so busy then with all sorts of activities that they did not have time to misbehave.

The enthusiasm displayed by the students in learning last year was missing in this lesson, is there any co-ordination/ understanding between the new teacher and the old teacher about this class of students?

Items observed	Comments
TEACHER PERFORMANCE The teacher did not seem to have an effective class management strategy at her finger tips to settle a class of restless children. She was not able to set the stage for leading students to get interested and involved in the topic of the day, and the tasks she set for these students who had been in the bilingual program for the past three years seemed to be underestimating their ability to do more with what they already know (however the boys could not even get it right).	
OVERALL COMMENT The teacher is a mature lady who has started her first year teaching after receiving her diploma. Apparently, she is still learning to understand her students, their background and their needs and has not yet found the appropriate strategies to deal with them. Other than that, the topic and the activity she has chosen for a class of students who have just exited from 3 years of bilingual program seems to reflect a lack of awareness of progression in language learning.	

Case studies

The two case studies below have been selected from a larger sample because they indicate the links between Program A and Chinese classes offered by other after hours providers, the attitudes of parents to the program and the kinds of issues which a school must face in implementing a program of this kind.

Case study one: " Sam" Year 2 (in 1999) ***Parent interview***

Time: 11.30 am **Date:** March 26, 1999 **Interviewer:** Irene Liem

Where do you come from? Where does your spouse come from?	Kwantung Province, China. East Timor.
How long have you been in Australia? How long has your spouse been in Australia?	8-9 years more than 10 years.
Do you have other children/family members living in the same household?	Only one son, Sam. Has many relatives from husband's family living nearby.
What language/s do you speak at home? a with your spouse b with your children c with other members of the family	 Hakka Hakka Hakka
What language/s do your children speak at home a with you b with your spouse c with their siblings d other members of the household	 mainly Hakka mainly Hakka mainly Hakka mainly Hakka
What made you decide to enrol your child in the bilingual program in this school? Do you understand the purpose and content of the program? What do you expect your child will end up knowing or being able to do as a result of this program?	Because they live nearby within walking distance from home, and also because their English is quite limited, she wants her child to know Chinese so they can keep communicating. She has observed the very unhappy situation of some of her relatives who cannot communicate with their children.
Are you happy with the program? Explain. Is your child happy with the program? Explain. e.g. does s/he find language learning difficult? does s/he talk about the program?	Yes, very happy. She thinks that the teaching method of the teacher is very good. Her son can speak, read and write stories, she is particularly impressed by the teacher's approach in teaching her son how to write stories and how to remember characters.
What do you like most about the program? What do you like least about the program? Is there anything that worries you about the program? Is there anything you would like changed or improved? Would you like your child to continue studying in the Bilingual Program? Why?	Same as above

How much Chinese did your child know before he/she started in the program?	Very little, only knows Hakka
How much English?	
Can you point to any evidence of your child's progress in Chinese?	
a does your child use Chinese to communicate with grandparents, relatives?	Yes, mainly in Hakka
b does your child use Chinese to communicate with people outside home, in school, shops etc.?	Can, if required.
c does he show interest in learning languages?	Yes.
d does he/she read, watch movies in Chinese?	Listens to Chinese CD
f does he/she write in Chinese to penpal/relatives?	Not very much, can write a few words, and very simple stories
	Has been to China twice.
e does he/she show any interest to travel to China?	Yes.
f does he/she know more about the Chinese culture?	More about Chinese
g for (Chinese background student) does he/she feel that he/she is a Chinese/Australian?	
Are you happy with the child's progress in English and other subjects in school?	She realizes that her son's English may not be very good at the moment but she thinks that it is still OK while he is young. However, she is not sure if it will be alright when he grows older/enters secondary school. Perhaps by then he will need to concentrate on his English.
Do you think there is any connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese?	
Does your child receive language support outside his/her school? e.g. Saturday school, help from siblings or parents etc.?	She enrolled him in the Saturday Chinese School run in Taiwanese last year, but because the script used is different from the one used in Program A, her son found it rather confusing. Subsequently, she withdrew him from the ethnic school. However if his current school is not able to offer him much Chinese in the upper school, she will have to put him back in the Saturday program so he maintains the language and does not forget what he has learned.
Is there anything else you want to tell us about your child that might help us understand more about how the program is working?	She thinks that her son can understand and speak a little Mandarin quite well, but in the reading and writing aspect she finds that what the program can offer is rather limited.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW

Speaking skills	
what language does the learner use	Use Target Language
a in interacting with the class teacher	Not observed
b in interacting with peers	sometimes
How fluent/accurate/spontaneous/culturally appropriate can he/she express what he/she wants to say?	can answer very simple and straightforward questions from the observer
Listening skills	
a how much/how quick can he/she comprehend what the teacher is saying to the class/to him/her?	Does not seem to understand fully teacher's explanation on how to work on the Maths problems presented to the class as class assignment.
b the type of response to show his/her comprehension?	
Reading skills	
a how much (characters, text) can the learner recognise and know the meaning of a given text, what level?	Can read familiar readers (picture books) taught by teacher quite fluently with accurate pronunciation and intonation.
b how accurate is his/her pronunciation and intonation when reading a text aloud	
Writing skills	
What can he/she write?	Student can write simple sentences and his character writing is acceptable.
Can he/she write independently ?	
How accurate is the writing?	
Any other ?	

Case study two: " Jenny" Grade 2 (in 1999) ***Parent interview***

Date: March 26, 1999 **Interviewer:** Irene Liem

Where do you come from?	Canton, China
Where does your spouse come from?	Separated from husband
How long have you been in Australia?	11 years
How long has your spouse been in Australia?	(no information)
Do you have other children/family members living in the same household?	None.
What language/s do you speak at home?	
a with your spouse	Cantonese
b with your children	Cantonese
c with other members of the family	Cantonese
What language/s do your children speak at home	
a with you	Cantonese
b with your spouse	Cantonese
c with their siblings	Cantonese
d other members of the household	Cantonese
What made you decide to enrol your child in the bilingual program in this school? Do you understand the purpose and content of the program?/ What do you expect your child will end up knowing or being able to do as a result of this program?	She learnt that it is the only government school in her neighbourhood which offers an intensive Chinese curriculum. Initially she intended to send her daughter to a local Catholic primary school which she believed would offer better discipline than a government school. However, she chose this school because she wanted her daughter to learn Chinese.

Are you happy with the program? Explain. Is your child happy with the program? Explain. e.g. does s/he find language learning difficult? does s/he talk about the program?	Yes, it is alright. Except that Jenny complains that she has no friend to play with during playtime.
What do you like most about the program? What do you like least about the program? Is there anything that worries you about the program? e.g. your (anglo-background) child learning Chinese as a second language alongside others who use one or other of the varieties of Chinese at home? Is there anything you would like changed or improved? Would you like your child to continue studying in the Bilingual Program? Why?	She finds the school environment and the facilities are very good at this school. In fact it is much better than the neighbouring school where Jenny had first enrolled. She prefers this school because she finds it to be stricter and has more hours for learning Chinese. However, she would only consider letting her daughter to continue studying in the Bilingual Program if it offers the same intensity after Grade 2. It is likely that she will move Jenny to a Catholic school next year as it will make little difference between a Catholic school and this one then if the bilingual program is no longer offered. Jenny can still learn Chinese at the Sunday Chinese school.
How much Chinese did your child know before he/she started in the program?	mainly Cantonese
How much English?	very little
Can you point to any evidence of your child's progress in Chinese?	
a does your child use Chinese to communicate with grandparents, relatives?	she has no relatives here
b does your child use Chinese to communicate with people outside home, in school, shops etc.?	with teachers at both day school and Sunday Chinese school.
c does he show interest in learning languages?	
d does he/she read, watch movies in Chinese?	Cantonese movies
f does he/she write in Chinese to penpal/relatives?	draws pictures
e does he/she show any interest to travel to China?	She has been to China to visit relatives before
f does he/she know more about the Chinese culture?	Yes.
g for (Chinese background student) does he/she feel that he/she is a Chinese/Australian?	More a Chinese
Are you happy with the child's progress in English and other subjects in school? Do you think there is any connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese?	She is more worried about Jenny's progress in Chinese than in English as she believes that the amount of contact her daughter has with the English language in her daily and school life will ensure that she will gain a good command of the language in the long run. Whereas it requires deliberate efforts on her part to maintain the standard of her daughter's Chinese.
Does your child receive language support outside his/her school? e.g. Saturday school, help from siblings or parents etc.?	Jenny is enrolled in a whole day school at a Sunday Chinese School run by mainland Chinese. It costs her $500-$600 a year but she thinks it is worth it because the school offers total immersion in Chinese across three subjects: Language, maths and art. She finds that the school provides Jenny with a solid foundation in Chinese.
Is there anything else you want to tell us about your child that might help us understand more about how the program is working?	She feels her child has improved tremendously especially in speaking Mandarin since her enrolment at this school, she can also write short stories.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW – Applied on a few occasions between March & May, 1999

Speaking skills	
what language does the learner use	
a in interacting with the class teacher	sometimes
b in interacting with peers	sometimes
How fluent/accurate/spontaneous/culturally appropriate can he/she express what he/she wants to say?	quite fluent and accurate, can express what she wants to say.
Listening skills	
a how much/how quick can he/she comprehend what the teacher is saying to the class/to him? b the type of response to show his/her comprehension?	Response to teacher's instructions promptly and accurately
Reading skills	
a how much (characters, text) can the learner recognise and know the meaning of a given text, what level? b how accurate is his/her pronunciation and intonation when reading a text aloud	Quite accurate in her pronunciation and intonation. Can recognise and read aloud familiar/taught words, and is making some progress in reading unfamiliar text.
Writing skills	
What can he/she write? Can he/she write independently ? How accurate is the writing?	Can begin to write simple sentences quite independently and is attempting to expand her skills in writing short stories
Any other?	Jenny seems to be more advanced than her classmates in handling Maths problems. This can be attributed to her attendance at a Sunday whole day school in which Maths is one of the subjects taught in Target Language.

Overview of Program A

The school is impressive in its concerted across-the-curriculum approach to bilingual education language teaching and the importance it gives to extending children cognitively as well as improving their language skills. The program is very much a team effort and the joint planning which takes place is critical component of its success. The fact that some Chinese parents travel quite long distances to ensure that their children can enjoy the benefits of this program is a mark if its public standing in the Chinese community. The professionalism and dedication of the teachers is evident from the interviews and from the observation of classes in the lower school – these are people with a wealth of experience behind them, a clear sense of their teaching objectives and a strong commitment to making the program work in spite of the difficulties encountered along the way e.g.variability of learner background, fluctuations in enrolments making it difficult to anticipate how many classes of Chinese children there will be from year to year, timetabling problems, scarcity of resources, occasional resistance to the program from non bilingual staff.

It is evident from this study that teachers in the Bilingual Program require special skills other than knowledge of the Target Language in order to teach a content-based curriculum that involves team teaching. As members of a team, they need to be able to interpret the views of their counterparts in the context of the Australian education system/classroom culture so as to adapt their thinking and methodology to match those expressed by other team members. Furthermore observations reveal that the bilingual teacher in Program A is an excellent language teacher capable of "stretching" the children to make the most of what they know and encouraging them to use Chinese actively in the classroom with a resultant increase in their competence and confidence in both speaking and writing.

In general both survey responses and case studies highlight the parents' support for Program A. Chinese parents interviewed in this study want their children to learn the Target Language and to achieve the level at which they can understand, communicate, and possibly read and write basic Chinese for cultural and intergenerational reasons. However they realise that this cannot be accomplished in a 3 hours a week program in a day school. A bilingual program such as that offered by School A is something which answers their felt needs and receives their wholehearted support. Parents' choice of this school is often driven by the existence of the Chinese-English bilingual program. Many of them also choose to send their children to Community Language schools or Saturday school to maintain and extend their proficiency in Target Language (For an indication of the teaching philosophy and flavour of one of the after hours schools which many of the children attend on Sundays see Appendix 1 – Interview with Ethnic School Principal and Appendix 2 – Observation of ethnic school program). This "double dipping" is in no sense an indictment of the bilingual program. It is simply a marker of the parents' commitment to linguistic and cultural maintenance and their desire that their child receive as much exposure to Chinese as possible. Parents generally express very positive views about Program A and this is not just a "warm feeling" based on the fact that their language and culture is acknowledged by virtue of its official status within the school, but rather it is an informed judgement about the pedagogical value of what the school is providing and an awareness that it is achieving something different from a limited exposure LOTE program

The parents seem highly aware of their children's progress and those few who are not satisfied will have no compunction about complaining to the school or even moving their child/ren elsewhere. Classroom observations suggest that parental concerns about the effect of the abrupt reduction of hours allocated to Chinese in upper primary school (from the ten hours to 2.5 hours per week from Year 3 onwards) on language maintenance may be well-founded. Once the children have left the bilingual class and moved into the regular LOTE program the content of lessons (or at least those observed by the researcher) is a) delivered by a teacher who appears not to have developed the skills required to tailor her input to their needs and b) far less interesting and challenging than what the children have been exposed to in the lower school.

Program B – Chinese within the mainstream

Although Program B is located in a nearby school on the other side of the main road to Program A it is closer to the heart of the commercial district and therefore attracts not only children of local residents, but also children of Chinese background traders and or non-Chinese background professionals who are working in the vicinity. This surrounding area has recently become popular as a place of residence for young middle-class professional families who cannot afford the costs of housing in more prestigious locations. Consequently the composition of the student population is less homogeneous than is the case for Program A with bigger variation in terms of the location of residence, countries of origin and socio-cultural-economic-linguistic backgrounds of the students.

Program Type

Program B, like Program A, offers bilingual instruction through the medium of Chinese-English in the context of the mainstream schooling. It differs from Program A in the following respects:

- Participation is voluntary. Those who do not opt for the bilingual approach can study LOTE Chinese for 3hrs per week instead. LOTE classes are also offered in Vietnamese.
- Participation in the program is open to both background and non background speakers of Chinese. Program B in other words, is somewhat similar in its structure to the two-way bilingual programs in the United States.
- Bilingual instruction continues throughout the school (although there is a slight reduction in the number of hours in the upper school)
- The two languages are distributed differently across the school week. In this program the lessons are organised in two hour blocks and children move from Chinese to English within a single day rather than spending half of the week in one language and half in the other.

The bilingual program is extremely important to the school which has a very small number of annual enrolments. If it had not been able to showcase the bilingual program it would have been forced to close some years ago.

Program aims, structure and content

Initially the bilingual program was offered to children in the lower school only, but in 1997 it was able to secure extra funding to extend it into the upper school. According to the Principal, the rationale for this change was to give students the opportunity to consolidate and extend what they have learned instead of facing an abrupt ending to their studies mid-way through their primary schooling. Whereas at its inception the BL program was conceived as a means of easing the transition of Chinese background children from L1/L2 mainstream schooling, this is no longer its fundamental aim because the mother tongue of most students is not Mandarin, the target language, but one or other of the Chinese dialects or in some cases English. So the aim of the program is no longer that of enabling migrant children to learn the basics in their first language so that they do not fall behind others in their academic development, but rather to offer all learners an opportunity for intensive instruction in two languages, one of which (Mandarin) has particular instrumental symbolic value of the Chinese-speaking community regardless of which variety they speak at home and the other (English) which is the official language of the host society. The school strives to maintain a balance of both background and non background speakers of Chinese in the program because it is felt that the Anglo background learners can act as English models for the Chinese speakers and vice versa. This is also a means of achieving one of the key objectives of the program, which is to contribute to intercultural harmony within the school.

Structure

Because the numbers of students in the bilingual program are small, composite class groups change form year to year. In 1998 Preps Grade 1, 2 & 3 were grouped together in the one bilingual class , with 4, 5 and 6 in the other. In 1999, because of a change in the pattern of enrolments, Preps and 1s and 2s are grouped together, with those in Grades 3,4, 5 and 6 forming a second composite class.

The lower school group is given instruction through Mandarin Chinese for 11 hours per week. These hours are divided as follows

A recent change to the structure of the program has been to institute a system whereby the BL children in the upper school are withdrawn from their main class for Chinese medium sessions rather than being assigned to a class apart (the Bilingual Group) for the entire school week. This means that they will spend a greater amount of time with the non-bilingual students rather than associating exclusively with their own group which then risks becoming cultural ghetto.

The School Principal emphasises that the school is as concerned with the social development of students as with their linguistic and academic achievements.

All LOTE and bilingual teachers at the school are fully qualified in language and teaching methodology. One of them has been teaching at the school since the program's inception in 1984. In 1999 there has been a change of teacher. The half time teacher in the upper school has taken leave without pay to look after a sick relative and has been temporarily replaced. The new teacher commented on the gulf between what her training had prepared her for (ie to work in a LOTE classroom with learners of similar ability) and what she was expected to do in the bilingual program.

The Principal of the school stresses that the program's effectiveness hangs on the quality of the teacher ...

> *"The most important quality I am looking for in the [bilingual] teacher is the ability to identify the individual needs of students and to help each of them open up to learning. This is particularly significant given that in a composite class, the teacher must be able to work effectively with children of various level of language proficiency and various language backgrounds"*

Resources

Until recently responsibility for development of resources for the program have rested entirely with the bilingual teachers, but the school has just received extra funds totalling $35,000 from the Department of Education. These funds are designated for the purchase of resources for the Bilingual Program. With the money it will be possible for the school to conduct an early literacy program in Chinese similar to the one happening in English by providing the reading materials badly needed by the program. It is anticipated that this will have a substantial impact on literacy acquisition in both Chinese and English.

The learners

In 1998 there were 28 children in the bilingual program and this number increased to 31 in 1999. A survey of BL students conducted in 1998 highlighted the heterogenous language background of this group.

Only four of those responding were from non-Chinese speaking families, but it is interesting to note that in two of these families English was not the sole language spoken at home.

The school finds it increasingly difficult to attract non background students to the program. The principal explains the situation thus:

> *"We have tried to publicise the special features and advantages of our BL program in the local community, however when Anglo parents learn about the social and linguistic profile of our students, they are afraid that the lack of native English-speaking model for the children would be a disadvantage. Many prefer to put their children in schools in the Clifton Hill area."*

Classroom observation

Observation of classes reveal that the approach to teaching in Program B is somewhat different than was the case for Program A, in part because of the wider range of abilities and language backgrounds within the class but perhaps more because of the different philosophies and orientations of the teachers. A sample of these observations are reported here (see below). The first two give an idea of the kinds of input learner are receiving in the bilingual program (lower and upper school). The remaining one gives some idea of the different approach adopted in the Chinese LOTE program (which is offered to those who have chosen not to join the Bilingual program) and the constraints under which it operates.

Observation one

Date:3/12/98 **Time:** 10:30am -12.30pm **Class observed:** Bilingual Program – Chinese class (combined Yrs 4,5,6)
Teacher: T **No. of students:** 8 **Observer:** Irene Liem
Purpose: To observe a bilingual class in the upper school
Lesson Content: Christmas celebration and Maths

Items observed	Comments
PRESENTATION AND ORGANISATION Students were asked to sit on the floor in front of the teacher. T discussed with students about the Christmas festivity and asked them to suggest words that were related to Christmas in Target Language such as Christmas tree, Santa Claus, Jesus, lights, angels etc. She spoke in Target Language but most of the answers volunteered by the students were in English, and the teacher had to translate them into Chinese and put them on the board with pinyin underneath each set of words. T then asked students to copy the words on the board and then to draw pictures beside those words. When they had finished , T asked students to write a few sentences about their experience with Christmas in Australia. Students went to their desks, sat down and worked on their writing task. T went around the classroom to help individual students with their writing tasks. This session was followed by Maths. T took out a protractor and asked students to sit in a circle. She introduced the use of the protractor, and gave each student a different angle to measure. T spoke to students in Chinese, but students asked/answered her questions in English.	It seems that students have limited vocabulary in Target Language re Christmas and it is inevitable that the teacher has to introduce them as new words to be learned As this is a composite class with various levels of maths, the teacher has to provide more challenging tasks for the more advanced students in the group who could have learned the same topic year after year. The teacher could have used this opportunity to make or to help students ask or answer questions in Target Language
CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE It was a very small group of students placed inside a small and crowded classroom. Although students were of different grades, they seemed to be quite comfortable with each other and the atmosphere was observed to be informal and easy. Students could move around the classroom when the teacher was not addressing the whole class. There was little off-task activities among the students as students seemed to be interested in what they were doing, and T was able to conduct the class quite smoothly.	
INTERACTIONS Although the teacher spoke entirely in the Target Language, students rarely responded in the Target Language, except occasionally in single words or in short phrases. Hardly a sentence in Chinese was heard either with the teacher or between the students. Although they seemed to have no difficulty understanding what the teacher said, however, they did not seem to bother about using Chinese to express themselves.	The teacher seems to be more concerned with getting the lesson through than with the key concern of a bilingual program: what can students do by learning the KLA in the Target Language

Items observed	Comments

STUDENTS' APPROACH TO TASK

Students were able to handle their Maths tasks with little difficulty, but when it came to writing Chinese, most of them approached their tasks diffidently. Except one or two students, the rest seemed to be struggling from word to word, requiring help from the teacher to deal with the expression of an idea and constructing them into a grammatically correct sentences.

TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE

The teacher showed enthusiasm in leading her class and was able to engage their interest in the tasks assigned to them. However, she did not make any effort to encourage students to use Target Language or to discourage them from using English to communicate with her and with each other. Also the activities in themselves were not communicative in nature, thus opportunity for language production was minimal.

GENERAL COMMENT

This was supposed to be a bilingual classroom in which the majority of the students went through the program from when they had been in the lower school. If these students had very little chance to speak the target language outside the classroom and were not helped to speak in class, then we have to ask what should be the expected outcomes of this bilingual program at the end of the primary years. Is the teacher guided by these outcomes in her planning and her teaching? What is this program be evaluated against?
(please refer to the notes on the interview with the teacher)

Observation two

Date: 16/2/99 **Time:** 1:30-2:30pm **Class observed:** Prep, 1 & 2

Teacher: S **No. of students:** 20 **Observer:** Irene Liem

Purpose: to observe a LOTE class in the lower school

Lesson Content: Chinese New Year celebration

Items observed

PRESENTATION AND ORGANISATION

The teacher told the students to line up outside the classroom again before re-entering the classroom because of the noise they had created. After they had settled down, the teacher reprimanded them in English. The whole process took about 10 minutes. She then went through the roll call with gusto, addressing the class in the Target Language ,"Good afternoon class" to which the class responded in unison, "Good afternoon teacher". Then she called out loud and clear the name of each student followed by good afternoon in Target Language . All students answered "good afternoon teacher" promptly and fluently.

After the roll call, the teacher took out a picture book which showed how Chinese New Year is celebrated in Australia. She first asked students what they knew about this festivity in English, and then went on to read the Chinese words at the bottom of each page followed by repeating them in English to explain the meaning. After that she asked what colour were the clothes the children were wearing. There were some quick responses from among the students – they shouted out "red" in Target Language . When T asked why the children were wearing red during Chinese New Year, their answer was because "red means good luck". Then T went on to explain some of the customs practised by Chinese families such as family dinner on New Year's Eve, ancestor worship, the giving of red packet to children and singles. After that she taught the class to say 'Happy New Year' in Target Language and told them how they should greet each other during this time with the phrase gong qi fa cai. She then showed the class photos of the lion dance and explained its significance and also how it was usually performed. The book reading sequence was followed by another activity, it was about the 12 Chinese zodiac signs, each of which is represented by one animal. It takes 12 years to run through one cycle. T asked if they could say one to twelve in Target Language . They could do it very spontaneously. She then put twelve picture cards on the ledge of the black board. She went through the name of each animal in the Target Language with the students without the pinyin and students were asked to repeat after her. Then each student picked up a card with the name of the animal in pinyin (not in characters) from a bag and then matched it with the picture card on the board. All the students managed to do so.

The next activity involved students making a big red packet as well as putting a wrapped piece of butter cookie inside. The teacher explained that instead of putting money inside the red packet as in real life, they were to put the wrapped cookie in. The teacher then distributed to each student a packet which was made in the previous lesson. Each packet had the name of a student on it but not that of the one who received it. When all the students had finished with the task of putting the wrapped cookie, each took a turn to call out the person whose name was on the red packet. When that person came forward, the one holding the packet would say the greeting gongqi gongqi (best wishes) and then handed him/her the packet, the recipient then responded with xiexie (thank you). The teacher helped each pair how to say and act in a culturally appropriate way.

The Grade 1.2. students finished the task very quickly and then went on to draw their own interpretation of the lion dance. The teacher provided them with photos and pictures which they could use as models. She also provided a typed caption in Target Language "Lion Dance" for them to stick on their picture. The Preps who were sitting on a separate table were only starting to make the red packet. Their progress was slower as they have half an hour less during their orientation to school life.

Comments

The class has adopted a useful routine of using the Target Language in a culturally appropriate way.

The older children in the class seem to be very familiar with every aspect of the Chinese festival and display confidence and excitement in providing the responses which the teacher is attempting to elicit.

If we do not expect students to learn much of Target Language linguistically. we can regard this as a good lesson as everyone has something to do — in terms of sharing what they already know or listening to what others have to say or making things for others or addressing someone verbally ...

Items observed	Comments
CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE As one activity was immediately followed by another during this lesson, there was no time for students to become distracted or disengaged. Although the older children in the class might have learned the topic about the Chinese New Year in previous years, it did not dampen their eagerness to display their knowledge of Target Language and the Chinese culture.	
STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION The older children were quite enthusiastic and were quite spontaneous in volunteering their answers. The younger ones were happy to follow their seniors as they were still trying to orient themselves to formal school life as well as learning a second language which is still a mystery to many of them.	
TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE The teacher hardly spoke in Chinese. She uttered some familiar phrases and words such as colours and numbers and name of animals which the students can recognise and understand. It seemed impossible for her to do otherwise as half of the class were beginners who hardly knew a word of Chinese. Despite having to deal with a big group of students of various ages and levels of proficiency in the language, the teacher was able to keep the class in control throughout with continuous activities centering around a theme which appealed naturally to children. She also gave opportunity for the students to practise saying aloud those familiar expressions and words that would provide a vehicle for beginners to interact with native speakers in expressions such as good afternoon, hello, how are you, counting numbers etc.	

Case studies

The three cases studies below give some idea of the strengths and the weaknesses of Program B and, in particular, of the issues which arise as a results of the mixed learner population. The case studies are chosen from a larger sample and consist of three learners, one from an English speaking background, one of Vietnamese origin and one from Hong Kong.

Case study one: " Robert" Year 3 (in 1999)

Parent interview

Interviewer: Irene Liem

Where do you come from? Where does your spouse come from?	Mother was born in Australia Father was born in Italy.
How long have you been in Australia? How long has your spouse been in Australia?	Since birth Her husband from whom she is now separated, has been in Australia for more than twenty years.
Do you have other children/family members living in the same household?	She has two adult children both in their late twenties and R, eight years old in her household. Her husband also has two adult children in his household
What language/s do you speak at home? a with your spouse b with your children c with other members of the family	Mainly English
What language/s do your children speak at home a with you b with your spouse c with their siblings d other members of the household	Mainly English, however when R visits his father's household, he always comes into contact with his Italian background relatives and thus is being exposed to the Italian language. By far he has a basic understanding of some everyday expressions of the language.
What made you decide to enroll your child in the bilingual program in this school? Do you understand the purpose and content of the program? What do you expect your child will end up knowing or being able to do as a result of this program?	She sees that it is important for R to know a second language which would be relevant to the future of Australia and therefore to R. She believed that China will be an important trading partner for Australia, and it would be an advantage for R's generation of young people to know the language and culture which would allow them to have access to useful information as well as relating to the Chinese people not only in mainland China but all over the world. She regards putting R in the program as an investment for the future, that is why in the past few years, she has tried her best to find a job near the school as she did not know of any other schools that could offer such a kind of program. She admits that she does not understand the content nor the operational aspect of the program although she is a member of the school council and feels frustrated not being able to gain access to such information as the school personnel do not seem to welcome any question re the program. The message she gets from their response seems to say "why do you need to know?" That is why she cannot tell what outcomes she could expect from this program for her child as she herself has very little knowledge of the language to judge.

Are you happy with the program? Explain. Is your child happy with the program? Explain. e.g. does s/he find language learning difficult? does s/he talk about the program?	She is a little disappointed that R is shy and reticent about the use of the language after being in the program for three years. Although R seems to be happy going to school and learning Chinese, he feels lonely after school as they do not live in the vicinity of the school and has no friends of his age to play with on weekends or after school. .
What do you like most about the program? What do you like least about the program? Is there anything that worries you about the program? e.g. your (anglo-background) child learning Chinese as a second language alongside others who use one or other of the varieties of Chinese at home? Is there anything you would like changed or improved? Would you like your child to continue studying in the Bilingual Program? Why?	Although she observes that R does his homework and character writing practice, she finds that he does not really know or understand what he is writing. She is therefore not sure if he has learned the basics required for future study. As R has moved on to the upper school, and the hours for Chinese have been greatly reduced, she feels that it is inadequate and is therefore contemplating transferring him to a school in her neighbourhood which has a LOTE if not a bilingual program.
How much Chinese did your child know before he/she started in the program? How much English? Can you point to any evidence of your child's progress in Chinese? a does your child use Chinese to communicate with grandparents, relatives? b does your child use Chinese to communicate with people outside home, in school, shops etc.? c does he show interest in learning languages? d does he/she read, watch movies in Chinese? f does he/she write in Chinese topenpal/relatives? e does he/she show any interest to travel to China? f does he/she know more about the Chinese culture? g for (Chinese background student) does he/she feel that he/she is a Chinese/Australian? Are you happy with the child's progress in English and other subjects in school? Do you think there is any connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese?	She was not aware of how much R knew until they were in Finland when they visited an exhibition of Chinese treasures in a museum. R was able to explain to M the meaning of some displays which were in Chinese. M did not know if R was correct in his interpretation/translation but was proud to know that he was ready to use what he had learned. R loves to learn about Chinese culture and shows an interest in travelling to China. He is very enthusiastic about their participation in the Lunar New Year celebration held in Richmond and was very disappointed that he was not chosen to lead the Lion Dance for his school. For R who knows no other relationship than what he has with a group of Asian kids could not distinguish skin colour as a dividing line among people. M feels that it is a joy to see that R has developed such an attitude towards people of another race and that this is what the BL program should be aiming at. She does not worry about R's progress in English as he could get sufficient support when he is relating to other house hold members at home.
Does your child receive language support outside his/her school? e.g. Saturday school, help from siblings or parents etc.?	None. She feels that she needs to have some background or basic knowledge of the language before she can give her son the support or encouragement he needs.
Is there anything else you want to tell us about your child that might help us understand more about how the program is working?	She is shocked to learn that R was being bashed at school by some non-Chinese background boys in the upper school some time ago. She did not know the real reason but suspects that R identifies too much with the Bilingual Program children and there could be some enmity between those who are in it and those who are not.

General Comment by the interviewer

When I come face to face with M, I am surprised to be talking to an executive director of a professional organisation. Before that I did wonder why Caucasian Australian parents send their children to a disadvantaged school for migrant children and did not realise that these parents have such strong reasons for putting their children in the Bilingual Program. She strongly supports the Bilingual Program and sees in it immense value for Australian children. For her it is not a language maintenance program for Chinese background children of migrant parents but a program that provides excellent experience for 'white Australian' children to have a taste of multiculturalism/biculturalism at a very young age. Although she has some misgivings as to the extent that her son can benefit linguistically, she expresses that she "would fight to keep it going". But how the program can be delivered to non-Chinese speaking background children with the view that they too can enjoy progress linguistically in the course of their primary education is an issue which needs to be thoroughly examined. Perhaps an alternate model of bilingual program should be introduced for these children. Parents of primary age students should not feel shut off or inadequate in a language program particularly when they want to be involved.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW

Speaking skills	
what language does the learner use	He uses Chinese
a in interacting with the class teacher	rarely
b in interacting with peers	rarely
How fluent/accurate/spontaneous/culturally appropriate can he/she express what he/she wants to say?	He is not confident to say perhaps what he already knows
Listening skills	
a how much/how quickly can he/she comprehend what the teacher is saying to the class/to him? b the type of response to show his/her comprehension?	He raises his hand and wants to respond to teacher's question but when teacher asks for his answer, he cannot answer. He seems to understand simple classroom instructions, such as raise your hand, sit down, copy words from the board by responding to them spontaneously
Reading skills	
a how much (characters, text) can the learner recognise and know the meaning of a given text, what level?	Can recognise some frequently occurring words, numbers, family members etc.
b how accurate is his/her pronunciation and intonation when reading a text aloud	Acceptable
Writing skills	
What can he/she write?	Can copy characters from the blackboard or textbook.
Can he/she write independently?	Cannot yet write independently. Stroke order not apparent
How accurate is the writing?	
Any other?	R is observed to be a keen student in class, there is a genuine interest in what is going on in class and a willingness to participate. However, judging from his written work, there seems to be very slight progress in his language development over his 3 years in the bilingual program

Teachers' assessment

1998 Chinese enjoys learning Chinese, especially oral activities, he has tried hard to pronounce each character accurately

Speaking & Listening	L2	cons.
Reading	L2	cons
Writing	L2	beg.
English	L2	cons-est.
Maths	L2	cons-est.

1999 he left school during first term

Case study two: " Max" Year 1 (in 1999) ***Parent interview***

Interviewer: Irene Liem

Where do you come from? Where does your spouse come from?	Vietnam also Vietnam
How long have you been in Australia? How long has your spouse been in Australia?	17 years also about 17 years
Do you have other children/family members living in the same household?	besides M, she has an older son aged 13
What language/s do you speak at home? a with your spouse b with your children c with other members of the family	 Vietnamese Vietnamese
What language/s do your children speak at home a with you b with your spouse c with their siblings d other members of the household	 Vietnamese Vietnamese English
What made you decide to enroll your child in the bilingual program in this school? Do you understand the purpose and content of the program? What do you expect your child will end up knowing or being able to do as a result of this program?	Their oldest son has gone through the bilingual program in School B and is now continuing studying Chinese in secondary school, they would like to see that M also follows the same route but without neglecting his Vietnamese as he is studying the language at a Saturday school. Other reasons for choosing Chinese are: a Chinese is becoming very popular, it is beneficial when travelling, or relating to Chinese in the Australian community. b Also the Vietnamese language is very much related to Chinese as the history of Vietnam is linked to the history of China, at some point it was a vassal state of China. Thus it helps one to understand Vietnamese culture and the language at a more sophisticated level through learning Chinese philosophy and religion and she wants her children to have access to this learning. Thus she expects her child to acquire a solid foundation upon which he can pursue further the language in the future just as his older brother who is doing very well in the language.

Are you happy with the program? Explain. Is your child happy with the program? Explain. e.g. does s/he find language learning difficult? Does s/he talk about the program?	Yes. M is happy learning Chinese however initially he did find it difficult because the sound of Chinese is quite different from his mother tongue Vietnamese and he needs time to adjust to it. When he comes home from school, he would sometimes try out some phrases with his mother to make fun of her since she does not know what he is saying.
What do you like most about the program? What do you like least about the program? Is there anything that worries you about the program? e.g. your (Anglo-background) child learning Chinese as a second language alongside others who use one or other of the varieties of Chinese at home? Is there anything you would like changed or improved? Would you like your child to continue studying in the Bilingual Program? Why?	The opportunity to learn Chinese intensively, however unlike the time when her older son was studying in the school, the intensive bilingual program was from Prep to Grade 4, now it is up to grade2 only. In addition the class is composite, combining Prep, 1 and 2 because of the small number of students enrolled. More resources should go in to support the program in terms of professional development for the teachers because she can see that it takes a lot of professional knowledge and skills to teach in a bilingual program Yes, because she can see the advantage of being a bilingual person especially in acquiring a second language which has an important place in the future.
How much Chinese did your child know before he/she started in the program? How much English?	No Chinese at all, but he has a sound knowledge of English when he first started in the program.
Can you point to any evidence of your child's progress in Chinese?	
a does your child use Chinese to communicate with grandparents, relatives? b does your child use Chinese to communicate with people outside home in school, shops etc.?	As parents are Vietnamese, they have no idea whether M is saying or writing correctly. However can see that M can understand a lot of spoken Chinese judging by the way he responds to his teacher in class, but he has not yet acquired the confidence to speak as he is always afraid that he may say something incorrectly.
c does he show interest in learning languages?	No.
d does he/she read, watch movies in Chinese?	He can copy characters but cannot write independently as yet.
f does he/she write in Chinese to penpal/relatives?	
e does he/she show any interest to travel to China? f does he/she know more about the Chinese culture?	He shows awareness of the differences between Chinese and Vietnamese culture in a positive way e.g. the zodiac sign for Chinese this year is rabbit whereas it is cat in Vietnamese.
g for (Chinese background student) does he/she feel that he/she is a Chinese/Australian?	M understands that he is an Australian born of Vietnamese parents.
Are you happy with the child's progress in English and other subjects in school?	Yes, M is doing well in English and other subjects in school. She is not worried about his progress in English.
Do you think there is any connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese?	She thinks that there is a connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese, — because M's English is quite sound, he would therefore have the confidence and security to explore another language even though they are very different.
Does your child receive language support outside his/her school? e.g. Saturday school, help from siblings or parents etc.?	M's brother who is studying Chinese in secondary school sometimes offers help to M in such areas as pronunciation or clarifying meaning of words he is not sure of.
Is there anything else you want to tell us about your child that might help us understand more about how the program is working?	M is a very independent child and will be able to make reasonable progress, the most likely disadvantage of the current composite class is that those who can accelerate will be held back because of the composition of the class.

General Comment by the interviewer

Mrs. V is a very articulate person and is able to offer much insight to why as parents of a non-Chinese speaking background would support the bilingual program. She is a member of the school council and understands the constraints of the program because of the stringent budget provided by the government.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW

Speaking skills	
what language does the learner use	He uses Chinese
a in interacting with the class teacher	Sometimes, when spoken to
b in interacting with peers	Rarely
How fluent/accurate/spontaneous/culturally appropriate can he/she express what he/she wants to say?	Short phrases, quite spontaneous. He knows what he is saying.
Listening skills	
a how much/how quick can he/she comprehend what the teacher is saying to the class/to him?	Can follow teacher's classroom instructions promptly.
b the type of response to show his/her comprehension?	In Maths class, he can add, subtract mentally and respond promptly to teacher's questions verbally.
Reading skills	
a how much (characters, text) can the learner recognise and know the meaning of a given text, what level?	Can recognise many characters in the teacher's Big Book (nursery rhyme etc) and can say them aloud together with the whole class. When reading text needs the help of cue such as pictures, and pinyin.
b how accurate is his/her pronunciation and intonation when reading a text aloud	Good
Writing skills	
What can he/she write? Can he/she write independently? How accurate is the writing?	Can copy sentences with well-formed characters. Has started to experiment with writing own sentences.
Any other?	M is observed to be a keen learner who makes use of his class time well not only in completing his work but also in sharing ideas with his classmates.

Teachers' assessment

1998 Chinese: A confident and enthusiastic learner, despite being non-Chinese speaking background, can achieve proficiency in the Target Language faster than many other background learners in class

Speaking & listening	L1	est.
Reading	L1	est.
Writing	L1	est.
English	L2	cons.
Maths	L1	est

1999 Chinese: is making excellent progress.

Case study three: " Ming" ***Parent interview***

Interviewer: Irene Liem

Where do you come from? Where does your spouse come from?	Hong Kong Deceased
How long have you been in Australia? How long has your spouse been in Australia?	About ten years
Do you have other children/family members living in the same household?	Three other children beside M. They were born in Hong Kong and are in their teens.
What language/s do you speak at home? a with your spouse b with your children c with other members of the family	Cantonese
What language/s do your children speak at home a with you b with your spouse c with their siblings d other members of the household	Mainly Cantonese as the three older children were all Hong Kong born, only M was born in Australia.
What made you decide to enroll your child in the bilingual program in this school? Do you understand the purpose and content of the program? What do you expect your child will end up knowing or being able to do as a result of this program?	it offers Chinese. Not very much.
Are you happy with the program? Explain. Is your child happy with the program? Explain. e.g. does s/he find language learning difficult? does s/he talk about the program?	Yes, she observes that M is doing well both in his English and Chinese. His reading skills in English are much beyond students of his year level. His Chinese character recognition is very good and she is very impressed with his ability to recite Chinese poems of the Tang dynasty. M enjoys going to school because he says it is fun.

What do you like most about the program?	A lot of individual attention. She observes that many students who have difficulty with their English make significant improvement, and her son does well both in English and Chinese
What do you like least about the program?	
Is there anything that worries you about the program?	no opinion
Is there anything you would like changed or improved?	Yes.
Would you like your child to continue studying in the Bilingual Program? Why?	would like M to continue
How much Chinese did your child know before he/she started in the program?	Some Chinese
How much English?	Very little English
Can you point to any evidence of your child's progress in Chinese?	
a does your child use Chinese to communicate with grandparents, relatives?	
b does your child use Chinese to communicate with people outside home, in school, shops etc.?	Sometimes, when being encouraged
c does he show interest in learning languages?	Yes, very much.
d does he/she read, watch movies in Chinese?	Sometimes, as his older siblings watch
f does he/she write in Chinese to penpal/relatives?	Not yet, but can write many characters already.
e does he/she show any interest to travel to China?	
f does he/she know more about the Chinese culture?	
g for (Chinese background student) does he feel that he/she a Chinese/Australian?	
Are you happy with the child's progress in English and other subjects in school?	Yes, he is doing very well.
Do you think there is any connection between progress in English and progress in Chinese?	
Does your child receive language support outside his/her school? e.g. Saturday school, help from siblings or parents etc.?	M is studying at Saturday school because she believes the more M is being exposed to Chinese the better especially when there are differences between the approaches adopted by both schools. In the Saturday school, traditional script is used while in Abbottsford; the simplified form is used. M does not seem to get confused learning both and it is therefore to his advantage to know both because in many parts of the world such as in Taiwan, Hong Kong the traditional script is still being used. Also the Saturday school provides reading material through a prescribed reader which she thinks is helping M's reading proficiency. As for support at home, she does help to check M's homework sometimes, but as M is quite an independent learner, she does not need to do much for him. M rarely asks his older siblings, as they have not got the patience to deal with him.
Is there anything else you want to tell us about your child that might help us understand more about how the program is working?	

General Comment by the interviewer

M's mother seems very happy with the school and the BL program and when asked about what needs to be done to improve the program, her response is "let things run their natural course". Like many other Chinese parents, in order to make sure that their children's Chinese reach an acceptable standard, they put them into ethnic language school in addition to what they have in day school.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEW

Speaking skills	
what language does the learner use	Uses Chinese
a in interacting with the class teacher	sometimes
b in interacting with peers	sometimes
How fluent/accurate/spontaneous/culturally appropriate can he/she express what he/she wants to say?	Fluent, can answer teacher's questions promptly without hesitation
Listening skills	
a how much/how quick can he/she comprehend what the teacher is saying to the class/to him?	
b the type of response to show his/her comprehension?	
Reading skills	
a how much (characters, text) can the learner recognise and know the meaning of a given text, what level? b how accurate is his/her pronunciation and intonation when reading a text aloud	M recognises many characters, he knows how to pronounce them in sequence and randomly when his teacher tests his knowledge on the many poems and rhymes in her big book. Evidently, he knows the meaning of the words as well.
Writing skills	
What can he/she write? Can he/she write independently? How accurate is the writing?	Can write independently short sentences which demonstrate her knowledge of grammatical structure although characters are well formed, the presentation on the whole is rather untidy
Any other?	M is a very intelligent student who learns very fast. His reading skills can be reinforced by his attendance of ethnic school, which provides prescribed text.

Teachers' assessment

1998 Chinese excellent in recognition of characters, active participation in class; however, presentation in written work could be better

Speaking & listening	L2	cons.
Reading	L2	cons.
Writing	L2	cons.
English (ESL)	A2	cons.
Maths	L2	beg. -cons.

Overview of Program B

Although this program shares some common features with Program A, it is somewhat different in its aims, structure and content and in the nature of its learner population. As in Program A, team planning is a crucial feature with the focus on content rather than on linguistic form. However it seems that the content presented to learners in Program B tends not to be as cognitively challenging as at the other school. This may in part be a question of teacher-technique but is possibly also due to the multiple levels of proficiency within a single class, (which are even greater than at School A)

The school is very proud to be offering a two way program which purports to cater for learners from both Chinese and English speaking backgrounds and the very small group of Anglo-Australian parents who have chosen to have their children educated bilingually are strongly supportive of the program. They would like to see their children being bicultural if not bilingual so as to inculcate in them the spirit of acceptance and tolerance to people of different culture and to acquire a language that is gaining international significance, economically and politically. They are loyal to the concept of bilingualism and can see the value of intensity of Target Language exposure which is not available in the regular LOTE program. However while the program seems to be having a positive impact on intercultural attitudes and relations within the school and on cultural understanding generally it is unclear whether the learners from an English-speaking background are well served by the program at least as far as linguistic development is concerned. Classroom observations and case study data reveal that the English speaking children may not be not progressing as far and fast in Chinese as one would hope and teachers either do not notice their lack of progress or regard it as "natural" because they are from non Chinese speaking backgrounds. English speaking parents also feel the need of further information about the program so they can give greater support to their children

On the other hand the Chinese-speaking parents are happy with the program although they believe that too little emphasis is placed on speaking skills. Program B compares unfavourably with Program A in this regard. While the target language is almost always used in the classroom opportunities for students' oral production tend not to be exploited to the same degree. In addition learners are not pressed to use the target language in responding to the teacher, even at the higher levels.

At both schools the LOTE program seems to be far less challenging than the bilingual program in terms of its content and the extent to which the target language is used in class. The LOTE teacher at Program B, while she is adept at keeping children in order and on task, does not have high linguistic expectation of the learners, seeing the class primarily as a means of getting the learners informed about and interested in Chinese culture.

The fact that, due to limited resourcing, the intensive bilingual and limited-exposure LOTE classes in the upper school have to be combined is unfortunate. Combining the classes exacerbates the problem of variable ages and abilities amongst the student population. Those who have participated in the LOTE classroom are not used to hearing Chinese used as the medium of instruction. It is simply not feasible for the teachers to deal effectively with all levels simultaneously.

Program C – Italian at the VSL

Program Type

Program C is a Saturday morning class in Italian offered through the Victorian School of Languages (VSL). (For background information regarding the VSL, see Appendix VI). The class takes place at a state primary school that functions after hours as one of the delivery points for VSL. The school is located in a northern suburb which, prior to the recent influx of young Anglo-Australian professionals, was inhabited primarily by Italian immigrant families. The suburb still has large numbers of Italian shops and services and it is not uncommon to hear Italian (or a variety of this language) spoken in the local area.

Staffing

The Italian teacher is a second generation Italian (born in Australia of Italian parents). She has studied Italian for 10 years (completing a major at tertiary level) and has undertaken teacher training at Mercy Teachers' College. She is currently in her 25th year of Italian teaching having spent 16 years in Primary Catholic Schools, 3 years in Secondary Catholic Schools 6 years in the TAFE sector and 20 years at the VSL. She currently also teaches Italian for four days per week in two mainstream (Primary Catholic) Schools.

Program structure and content

The class takes place between 9am and 12.15am each Saturday morning with a fifteen minute break mid-morning. In 1998 the students attending the class spanned Years 1-6 but in 1999 learners at Year 7, 8 & 9 also entered the program. In order to cater for the different proficiency levels and cognitive capacities of the learners, the class is often subdivided into smaller groups to allow differentiated treatment.

The first 30 minutes of a lesson the students read silently or aloud with a partner and they write a journal entry. This gives the teacher time to mark the roll, undertake any administrative tasks and perhaps start correcting the homework. This is followed by the teaching of points of grammar and then by revision. Such unit work usually includes a game or an oral activity. After recess the students continue with unit work and grammar work from textbooks. This allows the teacher to spend time with each individual student to give individual help and check work being done by students. The last fifteen minutes of the lesson usually include a game or some dictation. Reading and dictation are done regularly.

The program aims to cover a variety of discourse forms such as conversation and role-play. The units selected during the year focus on everyday language that can be used by students in day to day situations. Through the various discourse forms, students are presented with different styles and registers e.g. formal vs. informal. Sometimes, comparison between languages will be made and work on grammar will be undertaken. An attempt is made to teach students strategies to work out meaning for themselves.

Students are encouraged to read aloud in Italian. The teacher provides some reading materials until students are able to supply their own.

The program provides students with opportunities to explore and enhance their knowledge of Italian culture. Sometimes this is achieved specifically through an in-depth study, e.g. focussing on one region or cultural tradition/event. Usually, the cultural aspect is presented incidentally and the amount and depth depends on the topic/content being presented. (See Appendix two for a list of the documentation supplied by the teacher)

Given the context, in which the program is run, there are time limitations and bureaucratic constraints on the extent of parent liaison and other forms of community involvement that can be established.

The teacher reports that students often have difficulty submitting their homework on time (they have busy schedules and other commitments and often leave their work to the last minute). It is hard for the teacher to follow up on homework given that the class is only held once a week. The wide range of year levels and abilities means students have to be motivated and able to work independently as well as supporting each other.

Resources

Although Italian is always taught in the same classroom it is not possible to display the children's work or other materials because the facilities are used by a state primary school during the week. The teacher relies on her own resources and borrows some from the mainstream schools where she works. Photocopying is difficult because of the requirement that material for each Saturday's class be produced one week in advance. The photocopier often breaks down and there is access to only a limited number of Italian books in the school library. There is no access to computers and no AV staff to service the program.

The learners

There were 17 enrolments for this class in 1998 but only 14 children attended one or more of the classes observed. In 1999 there were only 13 children enrolled. Nine of these had been enrolled in the previous year and four were Year 9 students who had been enrolled in a higher level class but found it too difficult given their level of proficiency. The age of the 1998 cohort ranged from 7 - 14 years.

All children in both years of the program had at least one Italian-speaking parent or grandparent. The 1999 group was asked to fill out a language background questionnaire (See Appendix X for a complete set of results). The key information gathered from this survey is summarised below.

Connection with Italy

All of the students were born in Australia and five of them had travelled to or lived in Italy. Their stay ranged from two weeks to nine months. Only one student had both parents born in Italy.

Language use

The data suggests that most of the students were exposed to some Italian or a combination of Italian or a variant and English at home either from parents or, more often, grandparents. Responses relating to frequency of home use of Italian varied from student to student, but, not surprisingly, it was more common for students to hear or speak Italian than to read or write it. Questions about Italian language use outside the home indicate that, as far as this group is concerned, Italian is alive and well as a community language. Italian was reported as being used with friends and extended family by more than half of the students. Two students reported using Italian in shops and restaurants and five used Italian at social functions.

Language study

A number of questions related to the number of years students had been learning Italian and whether they had studied Italian either overseas or in a bilingual program. Only one student had studied in Italy (for one year from 1995-1996). Three of the Year Nine students had studied Italian for some years while in primary school and five of the primary students had studied Italian throughout their schooling. There was only one student (in Year 9) whose only experience of studying Italian was at the VSL. Interestingly, seven of the 9 primary students were studying Italian concurrently in the context of their mainstream primary schooling. It would be interesting to see if this is a common pattern amongst VSL students. The four secondary students on the other hand were taking Italian at VSL because it was not one of the languages taught at their regular day school.

Language ability

Students were asked to self-assess their abilities in Italian on a scale of 1-4 (with descriptors for each point on the scale) for each of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Although self-reports of language ability should be interpreted with caution, they give some indication of students' attitude to the language studied. In general students seemed fairly confident in their listening skills with over 50% reporting that they could understand most of what people said to them. They also appeared fairly confident about reading and writing with most saying they could write quite well and could understand most of what they read. They were slightly more reticent about their speaking ability with the majority reporting that they could speak some Italian provided that "the other person helps me and listens carefully".

Attitude to language classes

All but one of the students surveyed answered positively in regards to liking Italian and only one of them found the language difficult to learn. Students identified a number of aspects of studying Italian which they found enjoyable including playing language games and being able to speak more readily or confidently with their family members. Two students commented favourably on the fact that they were able to work at their own pace within the program and a number of them nominated specific aspects of the content which they had enjoyed. Two commented on the social aspects of the program, saying that it provided a friendly environment enabling boys and girls of different ages to socialise with one another. One student commented that the VSL program compared favourably with Italian at her day school that she found too easy and repetitive. (This same point was reiterated in some of the case studies).

As far as negative aspects of the program are concerned, a number of students mentioned the inconvenience of having to study on Saturday morning instead of participating in other leisure activities. Two or three students nominated homework and copying from the blackboard as the worst feature of the program.

The parents

Questionnaires were distributed to the parents of all children in the program and as completed all but two of these were returned (See Appendix X for a complete set of results). Half of the parents were born in Australia while of the remaining five, four were born in Italy and one was born in Switzerland but was of Italian descent (see Case Study Two below).

Almost half of the respondents used English at home and the remainder spoke a combination of English and either Italian, a dialect or another language. The dialects spoken in these cases were Sicilian, Calabrese and Veneto while the other language identified was Macedonian.

Information about Italian language use outside the home confirmed that provided by the children (see above).

Attitudes to Italian language study

All parents who filled out the questionnaire were supportive of their child or children studying Italian. When asked to rank a number of statements about their reasons for their child studying Italian, parents identified the following: the beauty of Italian; the value of studying the language for travel purposes and as a means of understanding Italian culture; and improving communication within the family as the most important motives. The fact that Italian is widely spoken in Australia and could also help students getting a job was seen by parents as somewhat less important.

Parents were also asked if they would encourage their child to study Italian at secondary school. All of the parents agreed that they would and six stated their reasons for doing so. Of the six parents, two suggested it was for cultural reasons and in order to maintain the language, two others thought continuity was important because, as one parent pointed out, *the longer students are exposed to language the more is learned and language skills are developed*. One parent stated his child was already doing Italian at secondary level while another the parents would encourage her child to study Italian at secondary school because she felt that *learning any language [was] an exciting, intellectually fulfilling and satisfying experience*.

Support

Parents were asked if there was any way in which they could support and enrich the Italian program. Although four parents stated their willingness to do so, only two provided an example of the ways in which they could provide any support. Both parents were willing to provide support by helping with reading, small group conversation and general aid or by helping the teacher with activities and demonstrations.

Comments from their children

Parents were asked if they recalled any comments their child had made about the program at its beginning. Of those who responded to this question eight recorded hearing comments from their children about how enjoyable they found the program. Two parents mentioned their child had found it difficult to understand but as one of the Year 9 children's parents pointed out, this problem had been resolved by moving the child to a different class where she could find her own level. One student thought there was too much copying from the board whereas another reported that she had *learned a lot* in her Italian class. Finally, one parent mentioned hearing her child say how much she liked the teacher.

Other

Parents were asked to provide any further comments and five did so. One parent felt that to date he had received no feedback on progress, no report or comments from teacher. One parent would like to see more Italian spoken and encouraged in the class and working through a workbook. Another parent *was thrilled with [her] daughter's opportunity to learn Italian at a convenient location and affordable cost*. Her daughter had gained much from the program and *her willingness to attend without parental pressure is an indication of how valuable and enjoyable she finds the program*. Finally two parents wanted Italian programs made more accessible at other locations, particularly independent schools because, as one pointed out, it would be great to have a program closer to home and *it would be even better if more schools offered the language*.

Classroom observation

The nature of the program is perhaps best conveyed by reporting the researchers' notes on one or two lessons (selected from a larger sample of classroom observations). Note that Italian was the predominant medium of instruction in all lessons observed and there was ready acceptance of this practice by the students who, because of their outside experience of Italian, are able to understand quite a lot of what is being said.

OBSERVATION ONE

5.9.98 Composite grade 1-7 – 13 learners

Although there are 18 learners enrolled, on average 13 attend regularly. The Yr.7 student recently moved into this group from a more advanced group as she lacks confidence and was unhappy.

11 a.m. -12.30 p.m.

First session (9-10.30 a.m.): Learners made Father's Day cards then had formal input on the definite article. They are finishing a unit on the theme of sport.

This session: The class was divided into two groups corresponding to the year level break-up above.

Classroom: Given that this room is used for this purpose only on Saturday mornings, there were no Italian displays of any kind. On the board, remaining from the first session, were Italian messages suitable to write in Father's Day cards. The teacher has to carry all materials to the room each week.

1st phase: The older children worked with the teacher on the floor; they were given five minutes to match paper cutouts of nouns and articles. They were required to justify their choices ('. because it's feminine singular and starts with a vowel') and then to say a sentence containing the same noun and article. All this was done in Italian with the children using the requisite meta-language with occasional prompting from the teacher. The more confident/able children's work was checked first with the whole group listening; they were then sent to their tables to write 10 sentences – 2 for each of 5 different sports, following the model *"Per il calcio occorrono..."* The teacher then stayed with the remaining learners, using English when necessary to help them understand. With the last learner she worked almost entirely in English.

The younger children worked alone, cutting out images of sports and sport related vocabulary, which they assembled and pasted into their exercise books: image plus equipment list.

2nd phase: The groups swapped. When working with the younger children the teacher always spoke Italian, the learners a mixture of Italian and English.

3rd phase: All children at tables, whole group feedback in Italian. Learners read sentences/ answered teacher's questions about sports and requisite equipment. All in Italian. No personalisation.

Comments:

- Very little English used by the teacher – only when necessary for helping an individual learner. Learners clearly understand they are expected to communicate with the teacher in Italian and generally do so, but use English to each other when working without supervision.
- Weaker learners either lack knowledge of basic classroom expressions (non ho capito, cosa dire etc.) or, perhaps, the confidence to use them.
- When the teacher was working with one group, children from the other group asked me for help at times.
- One girl wrote all answers to sports questions in English; this was not detected by the teacher, as during oral feedback phase she got away with one word Italian answers. When I asked her why she wasn't writing Italian answers she said she understood the questions but didn't know how to answer.
- Lots of overt focus on language structure

OBSERVATION TWO

Composite grade of 1-7 – 14 learners

11 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

First session (9-10.30 a.m.): Learners had explicit input on indefinite article forms and follow-up exercises from previous session.

This session (11 a.m.-12.30 p.m.):

1st phase: review of indefinite article forms using word lists still on BB – oral questioning using blackboard vocabulary: una città, un paese, una capitale: e.g. teacher asks "Che cos' è Milano?" > "E' una città."

2nd phase: learners are divided into two groups corresponding to their year level (1-4 / 5-7).

All learners worked from BB lists rapidly written up by the teacher after photocopying facilities proved unavailable during the break. One list gave all the regions in Italy, the other was 20 sentences to be completed, e.g. L'Italia è ...

The older learners were given a map of Italy and had to construct sentences using the regions list e.g. Firenze è la capitale della Toscana... They worked together on the floor, unsupervised, finding regions and capitals. A mixture of Italian and English was spoken. As they found answers, they wrote them into their exercise books.

The younger learners were given an atlas and had to complete the sentences listed on the board, writing them into their exercise books. Like the older group, they worked together, mixing languages. When stuck, one of them would go to the teacher or to a member of the older group for help.

The teacher used this time to give individual help to learners, checking homework and classwork written in their exercise books.

3rd phase: Learners returned to their tables and answered teachers' oral questions about various regions and cities and capitals.

Comments:

- Little English used except when learners were working together unsupervised
- Teacher very good at organising groups to work at different levels
- Lots of focus on grammatical structure

Case studies

The impact of the program on the families involved is illustrated by reporting two case studies (which have been selected from a larger sample). The case studies are of a primary school age and secondary school-age learner respectively and present data drawn from interviews with the students and their parents, and additional comments from the teacher.

CASE STUDY ONE

Student Profile

Name: "Roland"
Age: 9
Grade: 4
Place of birth: Australia
Travelled to Italy: No
Mother's Birthplace: Australia
Father's Birthplace: Italy
Languages spoken at home: Mainly English and some Italian

Roland lives with both parents and two sisters. The family speaks mainly English at home. His mother and grandparents appear to use Italian almost exclusively so he knew a little bit of Italian before he started at the VSL. He doesn't learn Italian elsewhere. He likes the VSL program, especially designing, story writing and work sheets.

Roland says that he is often spoken to in Italian and he often uses it. He rarely or never reads in Italian. He notes that he only speaks Italian with his family and extended family. He started studying Italian in Grade Three and has continued in Grade Four. He enjoys learning Italian and doesn't find it difficult. He likes to learn because it helps him to speak with his grandparents, though he occasionally finds it hard to fit in other schoolwork and Italian homework. His Italian homework he finds quite difficult and often needs help.

Self-rating of Italian language ability

Listening: Roland feels he can understand most of what people say to him in Italian.

Speaking: he can speak some Italian if the other person helps him and listens carefully

Reading: he feels he can understand most of what he reads but sometimes needs help.

Writing: Roland also feels he can write quite well in Italian, but sometimes needs help.

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Roland speaks in Italian at the VSL and is motivated by winning prizes and points! He thinks the program has helped his verbal communication with his family and classmates. The learning of verbs and how to say things has helped this. He also uses it in the greater community i.e. Italian shops and restaurants. He really likes learning languages and is learning German at his regular school. He watches movies and reads books and feels he's fairly competent, though he doesn't feel this is linked to his studies.

He writes postcards to cousins in Italy with help from his mother. He would like to go to Italy to meet his cousins and feels that the program has helped him learn more about the culture. He feels really Italian and links language competency to that feeling:

"I feel I'm really Italian. I can speak a lot of Italian, I think its my language"

One of his motivations for learning Italian is not to feel left out from family; he wanted to be like them. He enjoys being able to identify with both cultures and studying at VSL has led him to like Italian more. His parents take an interest in his Italian studies and ask him what he's been doing in class. Roland doesn't feel, however, that learning Italian has helped any of his other studies.

Parent profile

Roland's parents identify themselves as Italo-Australian (Mother) and Sicilian (father). His father arrived at age twelve and has been in Australia for 28 years. His mother says they speak mainly English at home and some dialect with their parents (Roland's grandparents). The children speak English with their grandparents.

They decided to enroll their children (Roland has two sisters also in the program) with VSL because they study German at school and this is the only opportunity for the children to know their Italian cultural heritage. Doing Italian at VSL also makes it separate from general school learning and, therefore, special in the eyes of the children. Roland (and the other two children Alice Year 8 and Lia Year 7) knew very little Italian before starting. Roland's mother is aware that the program is grammatically based and thinks this is important as the children learn the roots of the language. She feels that the vocabulary work could be extended. She is happy with the program and thinks that it is challenging. It is also accessible and affordable which is really important. She would, however, like to see more oral skills taught. She thinks that Roland and the other children are generally happy with the program though all found it a bit difficult to begin with. They all talk readily about what they've done in class.

Roland's mother states that, as a result of the program he:

- Can communicate with grandparents/relatives
- Shows an interest to travel to Italy
- Knows more about Italy and Italian culture

In this latter respect she has noticed that he reads English books about Italy and has generally a wider interest in Italy and Italian.

Teacher

Roland's teacher thinks he is quite immature and finds learning Italian a bit difficult. She thinks that a lot is expected of him at home. She notes, however, that he rates his own abilities quite highly and the program is giving him added confidence and increased self-esteem.

Language ability

Listening: generally understands

Speaking: will use simple sentences but will have a go at more difficult structures with a bit of incentive.

Reading: makes a lot of mistakes, low understanding – at vocabulary recognition stage.

Writing: will not put sentences together but seems to have some grammar concepts under control.

Roland needs individual attention and he is not an independent worker.

Summary

Roland is one of the younger children in the program and this is only his second year of studying Italian. He appears to feel he is quite competent at Italian and his parents agree that his communication skills with his grandparents have improved. His teacher is less convinced of his improvement and feels that he is too immature to know how to work independently. She does note that he tries hard and is a willing, if at times, demanding student. It seems obvious that Roland's family feels that learning Italian and understanding and appreciating Italian culture are important. All three of the children in his family attend the VSL and they are all in the same class. Overall Roland and his parents are very satisfied with the program.

CASE STUDY TWO

Student profile

Name: "Diane"
Age: 14
Grade: 9
Place of birth: Australia
Travelled to Italy: No
Mother's Birthplace: Italy
Father's Birthplace: Macedonia

Diane lives with her parents and brother. The family speaks English, Calabrese and Italian at home. It is mainly her mother, father and grandmother who use a language other than English. She and her brother tend to speak predominantly in English. Diane studied Italian for seven years at primary school and has only recently begun again at the VSL for Year Nine.

Diane is only occasionally spoken to in Italian (less than half the time) and rarely uses Italian to either speak, read or write. She only uses it with her extended family, never outside the home. She likes learning Italian and likes her Italian classes. She notes that it is 'interesting to learn another language that the rest of my family speaks.' She doesn't find studying Italian difficult but is not too keen on the extra homework it entails.

Self-rating of language ability

Listening: Diane feels she can understand most of what people say to her in Italian.

Speaking: She can speak some Italian if the other person helps her and listens carefully

Reading: She can understand most of what she reads but sometimes needs help.

Writing: Diane feels she can write quite well in Italian but sometimes needs help.

CONTINUED ☛

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Diane thinks her grandparents speak a dialect but is not sure which. She speaks in English with most of the members of her family though she occasionally speaks in Italian with her grandmother. She notes that her grandmother is really pleased by her growing interest and capabilities as none of the other grandchildren have shown much interest. She has been at the VSL since the middle of term 1999 and had only learnt very basic Italian during her primary school years. For this reason she feels her skills are not yet at a level good enough to utilise. While she doesn't like the fact that the school time breaks into her weekends she enjoys the classes and finds the work is easy because of the younger children in the group. She doesn't find the homework difficult though thinks the grammar is sometimes quite difficult. She talks about the program to her parents, other teachers and friends. She is not studying Italian outside the VSL.

Diane doesn't think she's been attending the program long enough to notice any change in her speaking skills. She does feel, however, that it has helped her talk more with her extended family. She doesn't use it outside the family environment, except perhaps when her mother shops at the local Deli. She was previously learning German but did not like the teacher nor the language. Learning Italian, however, has been a different experience and she is really enjoying studying it. She thinks it has certainly helped her regain a more positive attitude to language learning. She doesn't really read nor does she have any penpals or relatives to whom she writes in Italian. Diane has found, however, that she has begun to watch slightly more TV programs in Italian.

Even though her parents aren't involved in the school or the program, they ask her about what she's doing and her mother helps her with her homework. She would very much like to go to Italy and meet all her relatives. The program has helped enhance her understanding of Italian culture and in particular the difference between Italian and Australian cultures. She also feels that the skills she is learning in the program would enhance her communicative abilities if she were to visit Italy. She has been using Italian on the net and when asked responds that she is Italian, even if, as she states, she uses basic sentences. Family social outings to Italian clubs enhance her appreciation of her background and also enable her to practice and recognise her skills. Diane equates her language skills with her cultural identity and feels that the more proficient she becomes the more Italian she feels.

Parent profile

Diane's parents are both from non-English speaking backgrounds. Her mother was born in Calabria in Italy and her father in Macedonia. Her mother arrived in Australia aged 7 and has been here for over forty years. Her father has been here for 25 years. Her mother confirms that they speak English at home with a little bit of dialect with the extended family.

The decision to attend the VSL was entirely Diane's. She didn't like the LOTE offered by her school and through a friend (who also attends this program) learned about the VSL and their Italian program. Her mother states that they are not overly familiar with what is being taught outside that which Diane tells them. They occasionally discuss the program with the teacher. They are happy with the program and like the fact it is an option for Diane in VCE. Her mother notes that the multi-aged classroom has been an advantage for a new student as it has allowed Diane to find her feet and appropriate level. They are happy that Diane enjoys attending and thinks she finds learning Italian quite easy.

Diane's parents have noticed an increase in her desire to travel to Italy and that she is more interested in learning about the diverse cultural aspects. They think it has certainly enhanced her cultural identification and her willingness to talk in Italian to others. They feel that from a personal and academic point of view that VSL program is really positive. It expands her options and choices in the future while aiding her connection to her 'roots'.

Teacher

Diane's teacher finds her to be a very mature student with a good understanding of her abilities. She thinks Diane makes the most of the Italian class and benefits greatly from this attitude. She is very positive about attending and does the work to the best of her abilities.

Listening: Understands quite well

Speaking: Not producing much at this stage. Should improve with increase in confidence.

Reading: OK

Writing: will use structures provided but also includes her own ideas. Improved greatly.

Her teacher feels she needs to focus more on her oral skills. Her understanding of how language works in relation to her writing and comprehension has improved greatly.

Summary

The decision to attend the VSL program has obviously been a positive one for Diane. It has begun to improve her language skills and certainly enhanced her cultural identification with her Italian heritage. Her teacher has noticed her motivation and willingness to learn and her parents feel her interest in general has increased since she began frequenting the program. Diane seems to feel she is getting what she wants out of the program and learning Italian is making her not only more capable of conversing in Italian but also feel more Italian. She and her teacher seem equally aware of her strengths and weaknesses regarding language learning and attitude.

Overall summary of findings at School C

The VSL program seems to be a great success with students, parents and teacher. What comes through quite clearly with almost all of the interviews and questionnaires is that the students are enjoying learning Italian in this environment. What is also clear is the teacher's understanding, appreciation of and responsiveness to the varied reasons for which the students attend. The variety of motivations is most clearly conveyed through the information provided by the parents. In most cases the parents and/or grandparents feel it is extremely important that the child is able to access her or his roots. The notion of cultural identity and appreciation comes through much more strongly than academic considerations. Many of the parents recognise the usefulness of second language learning but for the most part they focus of the child's ability to converse and participate in the wider Italian heritage that they have.

Interestingly the students are, for the most part, very aware of this aspect of their studies and many of them equate language learning quite closely with their sense of belonging and identity. The older students appear to have made an independent and conscious decision to attend the VSL program outside of any external pressure. Most students are appreciative of the fact that the program helps them communicate with grandparents (in particular) and other relatives. The younger students seem to feel they use and are exposed to Italian more often than perhaps occurs in reality but this is not necessarily a negative observation. They certainly all feel that the Italian speakers that they meet, either within or external to, the family group appreciates their language skills.

It should be noted that the teacher uses a considerable amount of the LOTE in the classroom and this seems to be taken for granted by the students. The teacher is also particularly skilful at dealing with the different proficiency levels and needs of her students. Her approach to teaching Italian is fairly traditional, but there is a definite sense that both the students and parents find this appropriate and approve of the emphasis on Italian grammar and such activities as dictation. This could possibly be a reflection of their own educational experience. At the same time all three groups; students, parents and teacher, felt that oral skills need to be improved and more opportunities provided for practice. There is also the recognition that learning Italian outside regular school hours makes it appear "special" as well as being accessible to the students. Many of the parents expressed an appreciation of the affordability of the program in comparison to others that are available.

The only negative comments that the students had in regards to the program centred on its timetabling on a Saturday morning and having to juggle the extra work. There was a consensus on appreciation and acceptance of the content and many students emphasised their preference for the VSL program over what they were offered at their regular school.

In a program of this sort, with many students attending from different community locations it is impossible to ascertain what influence it has on the community, as it does not exist within a specific area. On a more general level, however, it seems to have a positive ripple effect on the participants and their individual community connections. Many parents spoke of the pride they and particularly their parents had in watching their children learn the language of their childhood and family. The recognition of this aspect as fundamental to the program's success is apparent in all the interviews, whether by student, parent or teacher.

Program D – Italian within the mainstream

Program Type

Program D is delivered in a state primary school in a northern suburb of Melbourne. The suburb and the school have a multicultural population including substantial numbers of second and third generation Italians as well as more recently-arrived immigrants from other countries.

Program D is an insertion program jointly funded by the Department of Education in Victoria (DoE) and the Comitato di Assistenza Italiani (CoAsIt). (For background information about CoAsIt and the nature of the cooperation with the DoE see Appendix 6) This program was chosen for investigation after a telephone survey 27 other schools with COASIT insertion programs. The reasons for the choice was that, according to the estimate of the Vice-Principal, 20-30% of students attending the school were of Italian background[2] and it therefore seemed sensible to build on the community language resource that already existed within the school community.

Program D was established 6 years ago. Its establishment was preceded by a survey to uncover parental wishes about LOTE teaching. Italian was chosen because it was strongly represented in the local community. The Principal then approached the COASIT who agreed to fund one hour. When the school re-applied for COASIT funding in 1997, it was given the choice of either continuing the 1 hr per week arrangement or extending the program to 2.5 hours (the s provides matching funding for COASIT classes which meet its minimum requirements). It chose the latter course, but in the third week of October 1998, the school was advised that in 1999 the level of COASIT Funding would be reduced to two hours. Justifications for this included a reduction in DOE funds, cutbacks on Italian Government funding, the claim that many schools find it difficult to free up 2.5 hours in their timetable for the study of Italian and an anticipated increase in teachers' salaries.

Staffing

Six teachers have taught on the program during the six years of its life, including two who worked on it for up to 3 years. According to the school Principal this high staffing turnover has had negative effects on the attitude of some learners.

In 1998 there were two COASIT funded teachers involved in the delivery of the program, one employed full-time and the other on a half-time basis.

Teacher A

Teacher A was born in Argentina of Italian parents. English is her first language but she also knows Spanish and Italian. She has studied Italian for a total of 9 years (6 years at High School and 3 years at Teachers' College. She has also completed a Diploma of Education at Phillip Institute of Technology (LOTE Method) and a Bachelor of Education at the Catholic University.

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[2] Other COASIT-funded programs had much smaller proportions of background students or they did not know about the language background of those in the program. Contact with school administrators revealed that school record keeping systems do not provide detailed information about student background. Administrators' initial responses tended to be based on knowledge of students' surnames. Those administrators prepared to check the school records said that their estimate was derived from answers to a question about home language use; this fails to identify many Italian background children, for example those with an Italian mother whose surname has changed, or those with Italian grandparents. In two schools the information was checked with the Italian teacher. Two administrators spontaneously expressed the opinion that more should be done to research students' language backgrounds.

Teacher A is in her 12th year of state PS teaching. She spent 4 years as an Italian specialist and 8 years as mainstream classroom teacher. 1998 is this teacher's first year as a COASIT funded specialist and she is paid for contact hours only. The School provides an additional allowance for extra duties such as yard duty. The school also pays her additional funds for coordination of the LOTE program. Her workload consists of 1 hour Italian Language and a half-hour of Italian through Music to all 11 groups, and works without lesson free time. Her contact hours amount to 16.5 in total (she finishes at 11.30 on Thursdays).

Teacher A was required to attend staff meetings but did not plan jointly with other teachers. Planning for her classes was done in her own time

Teacher B

Teacher B was born in Australia of Italian parents. Her first language is English and the second Italian. She studied Italian for 8 years (5 years at High School and 3 years at tertiary level). She holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Melbourne (LOTE Method)

Teacher B was in her 3rd year of State PS teaching. For the previous two years she had worked a full-time equivalent across two locally funded schools. This was her first year with COASIT. She taught 1 hour of Italian through Art to all 11 groups, working without lesson free time for 2.5 days. She had a total of 11 contact hours and occasional half-hour of preparation time-before lunch. She coped with the lack of preparation time by assigning clean-up duties and the job of setting up for the next group to chosen students during the last minutes of her lessons. During the assignment of these tasks the rest of the class played language games and discussed recently completed activities. On Thursdays and Fridays she taught for COASIT at another inner city primary school.

Teacher C

Teacher C joined the school staff in 1999 and is the only LOTE teacher at the school. The 1998 teachers are no longer employed at the school. It has not been possible to get information about Teacher C's qualifications and prior experience but, according to the Vice-Principal, she is a dedicated teacher and has shown the ability to fit in and be part of the school. She has thereby gained the support of the other school staff. The Principal sees (this whole school support for the Italian program as a key factor in its success.)

Program Structure and Content

In 1998 there were 313 students in the program divided into 11 composite classes (including 2 multi-age classes) of around 28-30 students per class:

3 x Prep/1
1 x 1/2
1 x 1/2/3
1 x 2/3
1 x 3/4
1 x 4/5
1 x 4/5/6
2 x 5/6

Each class had a total of 2.5 hours Italian comprised of 1 hour of language instruction and one hour each of Italian/Art and Italian/Music.

In 1999 the staffing was reduced and the time allocation to the program was therefore reduced to 2 hrs per week. During the week, 12 hours are allocated to teaching LOTE and 10 hours are devoted to teaching LOTE through Art. Music is no longer taught through Italian.

The Vice-Principal plays a dynamic role in the Italian program. Since CoAsIt funding does not cover preparation time for the LOTE teacher he takes Art for two hours a week in order to allow time release for the Italian teacher to do her planning.

The main aim of the program, according to the Vice-Principle, is to heighten cultural awareness in the general sense and achieve knowledge of Italian culture among the learners. There appear to be no clearly specified linguistic objectives for the program. According to one of the teachers *"It is not necessarily an expectation that all children will be fluent by the end of Grade 6, however they do leave Primary School knowing some of the functions of the Italian language and with a good knowledge of the Italian culture."*

According to the School Principal, the school strives to give the message that Italian is part of the mainstream curriculum. Other Key Learning areas are regularly incorporated within the LOTE program when they naturally complement the work done in Italian. Art, Music, Maths, Science and other Key Learning Areas are integrated whenever possible. The LOTE program attempts to fit in with the classroom program/units. Within these units, the LOTE teacher identifies the language focus and identifies possible links with Italian culture and language.

The current LOTE teacher says that there is some focus on the formal features of Italian, for example, students are taught to pluralise nouns. This is however done within the context of the unit of work or lesson. Similarities and differences between English and Italian are also explored during the course of the lessons.

Normal reporting procedures apply, with a special section on learner reports for Italian. The Art teacher may choose to enter comments here or under the section for Arts. A list of available documents relating to the planning of the program and the way in which learners are assessed are listed in Appendix

The school community is involved in various activities such as "Italian Day" They are encouraged to participate in the day's events and in the past have helped with the preparation of lunch on the day and the making of costumes for the children. Parents are not however involved in the day to day class activities.

Resources

In the early stages of the Italian program a room was set aside expressly for Italian but space and timetabling constraints rendered this arrangement impossible to maintain. In 1998 and 1999 Italian classes have been held primarily in the Art room (except on Fridays when this room is used for another purpose). This has made it possible to organise displays. In previous years teacher's access to materials was limited by what they could carry from room to room.

Initially a minuscule budget was allocated to Italian for materials and resources but now the program is quite well funded: there is a LOTE budget which accounts for 50%, the other 50% comes from school canteen takings. There is also a library LOTE budget as a sub-section of the English library budget. Resources and books are also obtained from the CoAsIt Resource Centre.

When the program started there were many learners in need of intensive ESL instruction and specialist ESL classes were offered for them. Now the numbers have dropped markedly and individuals are withdrawn from mainstream classes to work with the ESL specialist. Whereas parents have always accepted Italian as part of the curriculum, Italian teachers themselves in the early years of the program found the presence of ESL learners in the Italian classroom a real burden and found themselves giving part ESL, part Italian specialist language help.

The LOTE teachers made the following comment about resources at this school:

"LOTE Italian seems to be a very well resourced KLA, however resources for upper grades (Primary) are still inadequate or at an inappropriate level for

learners of Italian LOTE in Victorian/Australian schools"

"Students of Grades 4,5 and 6 require appropriate resources which do not assume that they are fluent or mother-tongue speakers"

The problem in choosing language learning materials for older learners is that published programs for this age group assume a degree of linguistic competence far beyond what actually exists among learners. Materials pitched at a suitable linguistic level are perceived by learners to be *"babyish"* or not *"groovy"* enough.

Although learners in the upper grades have been exposed to the Italian program in this school for several years, they know just a few words and do not string them into sentences. For younger learners it is easier to find suitable materials – the **Arcobaleno** series is used a lot in the early years.

Learners

There are currently approximately 320 students at School D, 61 are of Italian background and approximately 120 are ESL from a range of immigrant groups. To find out more about the students' language background and attitudes to learning Italian questionnaires were administered all but seven of the students of Italian background and to a random sample of 31 of those identified by the teacher as being from English-speaking backgrounds.

Italian background students

The age of the students in Italian background group ranged from five to twelve years with the greatest number of students being in the nine-year-old group.

The majority of students were born in Australia but four were born in Italy and five students were born elsewhere. Of the five students born elsewhere one was born in each of the following countries – Yugoslavia, Switzerland, Brazil, Iraq and New Zealand. The non Australian born students varied in terms of their age or arrival with some having been in Australia for 6 years and others for less than one year. One of the Italian-born students had arrived in Australia only two years ago.

Eleven of the fifty-five students had travelled to or lived in Italy and their stay ranged from two weeks to six years as the table below shows.

Fifteen students had both parents born in Italy. A slightly higher number of mothers were born in Australia while the opposite was the case with fathers.

Language use

The data suggests that most students in this group are exposed to some Italian at home although this seems to be mainly from grandparents. The four students who stated someone in their family spoke a dialect did not state which dialect was spoken. The other languages spoken by students and their families included Greek, Assyrian, Turkish, Filipino, Serbian and Portuguese. In many instances student answers suggested that a combination of languages were spoken by various family members.

Only a small number of students always used Italian at home both for speaking and for reading and writing. Approximately a third of the students rarely, or never, spoke or were spoken to in Italian, and about half of the students stated that they rarely or never read or wrote in Italian.

Just over two thirds of students mentioned they used Italian with their extended family as well as using Italian at school. Just under two thirds of students also used Italian with their friends. Just over a third of the students mentioned they used Italian in shops and restaurants. Fourteen students also suggested they used Italian in places or with people other than the ones identified in the questionnaire and half of these students in fact used Italian at their football/soccer club.

Instruction in Italian

Most students responding to this section of the questionnaire had studied Italian throughout their schooling. Four students moreover stated they had attended a bilingual school or a school where all school subjects were taught in Italian. One student had attended such a school in Italy and another one in Argentina.

Self-rating of ability

Students were asked to describe what they could or could not do in Italian. Approximately two thirds of the students felt they could understand most of what their family or people said to them in Italian and could also speak Italian, particularly with some support. Nearly a third of the students felt they could not read or write in Italian while similar numbers felt they could read most of what was presented to them and could write quite well even if some help was needed.

Attitude to Italian

Students were asked to state how they felt about learning Italian at their school. Just over two thirds of the students liked their classes and just over one third found studying Italian difficult. Finding the study of Italian difficult did not necessarily preclude students from enjoying their classes and twelve students fell into this category.

Eighteen students did not respond to the question asking them to identify what they liked most about the Italian program at their school. Seven students mentioned they liked everything or at least most things. Another seven students liked talking or speaking while yet another seven liked games. Six students enjoyed doing work or learning new things and five liked numbers. Three students enjoyed understanding or, as one of the students put it, *knowing all the answers*. Two students felt they liked nothing, two students liked reading, two thought Italian helped them while two students enjoyed *making things* (presumably a reference to hands-on activities undertaken in the art class).

Students were also asked to identify what they liked least about the Italian program at their school. Seven students disliked reading books while for three students what they liked least was studying things already known or *learning the same things all the time*. Two students did not like doing Art while for another two it was writing that they liked least. Two students did not like talking and another two students found they disliked it *when something* [was] *hard* and they did not understand. Finally, one student did not like the LOTE teacher.

English background students

The age of the students in this category ranged from five to eleven years with the greatest number of students being in the ten-year-old group. All of the students were born in Australia and none had travelled to or lived in Italy. Three-quarters stated that their parents were born in Australia. The other birthplaces listed for parents were England (2) Malta (1), Scotland (1), New Zealand (1) and China (1) Greece (1) and Lithuania (1).

Language use

The data indicates that the majority of students in this group were exposed only to English and a small number of students had a relative who spoke another language. The other languages spoken by members of the students' families included Chinese, Greek and Lithuanian and Yugoslav. The majority of students stated they rarely or never spoke or were spoken to in Italian, and never read or wrote in Italian. For most students in this group the only place where Italian was heard or used was the school.

Language instruction

The majority of students seem to have studied Italian throughout all their years of schooling but only one student stated he had studied in a school where all subjects were taught in Italian and this had occurred in Australia in 1993. (We are aware of no such school in Australia so it may be that the student has misunderstood the question).

Self-rating of ability

Results of self-assessments of language ability indicated that those with a non-Italian background were somewhat less confident in their ability than their background speaker counterparts. Half of the students thought they could understand some of what people said to them in Italian and the remainder was almost equally divided between students who could not understand Italian at all and students who could understand most of what was said. Just over two thirds of students felt they could speak some Italian while almost a third felt they could not speak Italian at all. Approximately half of the students thought they could understand a bit of what they read while the remainder felt they could not read Italian at all. Just under a third of the students suggested they could not write Italian at all, and just over a third stated they found writing quite difficult. The remaining third felt they could write quite well even if sometimes they needed help.

Attitudes to learning Italian

Approximately two thirds of the students liked their classes and almost half of the students found studying Italian difficult (these two categories were not mutually exclusive). When asked to identify what they liked most about the Italian program at their school. Seven students liked playing games or *doing games and activities*. Four students liked *everything* but an equal number of students liked nothing about the program. Three students enjoyed learning new words and another three liked learning Italian because *it* [was] *good to learn a different language* even if one of these students liked it but [was] not very good. Although two students did not say what they enjoyed in their Italian classes, an equal number of students, two in each category, liked doing fun activities or enjoyed drawing things or liked speaking a little bit. Finally, one student thought she would get a better job if she *knew more than just English* while one student thought that learning Italian was *silly*.

Students were also asked to identify what they liked least about the Italian program at their school. Nine students did not offer a response to this question. Five students disliked *everything* or at least *most of it*, another five did not like Italian *when* [they] *did not understand the work* because as one of these students pointed out, he *didn't understand and was nervous*. Another five students disliked working in Italian or doing specific work such as counting or reading in Italian. A smaller number of students, three in all, did not enjoy doing *boring things* while two students disliked *talking*. Two students said that there was nothing that they disliked about Italian.

In general what stands out from this survey of students is the variability within the learner population, both in terms of language background and patterns of home language use and also in terms of perceptions of the program and self-ratings of language ability. While we must be cautious about interpreting self-assessments as an index of actual ability they do give some indication of how students feel about their achievements and the picture is very mixed. Attitudes to the program are more often than not positive, but there are nevertheless a number of students who express negative views, which was not enrolled in program C.

Parents

Questionnaires were distributed to the 229 families of children attending the program at School D but only 52 were returned. It appears from survey responses that around 50% of the parents' respondents (or their spouses) were born outside Australia, in Italy, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq, Greece, Argentina, China, England and Vietnam. Only in five instances were both parents were born in Italy.

Those born outside Australia were asked to state the year in which they came to Australia. Three of the twenty-one respondents in this category came to Australia in the 50s, six in the 60s and the same number came in the 70s. While two parents did not specify the year in which they came to Australia, two mentioned they had come in the 80s and three had arrived in Australia in the 90s.

Language use

Just over two thirds of respondents and nearly half of the spouses used English at home. Only two respondents and the same number of spouses spoke Italian at home. Approximately one fifth of respondents, their spouses and other members of the family spoke another language. Only six children overall reported to be using a language other than English at home. The other languages spoken included Italian (1 student only), Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Assyrian, Chinese and Vietnamese. In a small number of cases, various family members spoke a combination of English and either Italian, a dialect or another language. Sicilian and Calabrese were the Italian dialects mentioned.

Parents were asked if their child had studied Italian either outside school hours and only two students had done so, with one of them having studied in Italy.

Attitudes to the program

The vast majority of parents reported being happy with the Italian program while six parents were not sure and three were not happy about the program.

Parents were asked to rank, in order of importance, a number of statements about the value of their child studying Italian. Parents felt very strongly that *knowing the language helped to understand Italian culture* Italian background parents also valued the language *as a means of improving communication with the family.* A substantial number of parents also considered that knowing *Italian* [was} *very important for travel* and that it was important to learn because *Italian* [was] *widely spoken in Australia* and *it* [was] *a beautiful language.* In general parents did not see the study of Italian as been very important to their child obtaining a job.

When asked if they recalled any comments their child may have made about the Italian program at the beginning of their studies. Fifteen parents did not provide a comment and twelve stated they could not. Thirteen parents however, suggested their child *seem[ed] to enjoy the program,* their child *was interested and thought the program [was] good* and in one particular case the child *was rapt about learning a new language.* Twelve parents commented specifically on the aspects of the program and these children had mentioned they knew some *colours, flowers and numbers* or had spoken about *Italian food* or had *sung an Italian song.* Six parents mentioned their child had had some problems and thought Italian was too hard to understand or *didn't like idea of learning Italian.*

Parents were also asked to record any comments their child may have made recently about the Italian program. Twenty-two parents either said they could not recall or did not provide a comment. Eleven parents thought their children like[d] the program and they were happy and enjoy[ed] the class. Seven parents made comments about specific content and suggested their child like[d] *learning about colours* and *saying buongiorno* while others *like[d] the songs or had fun playing games and painting.* Finally, two parents mentioned their child *still [made] the same comment – I don't understand.*

Nineteen parents made additional comments in the space provided on the form. Twelve parents said they were pleased with the program and would like to see the program continue. Five parents were not happy about the program and three of them were of Italian background. These parents said they would like to see their children learn more about the language and generally felt their child had not learned anything to help in everyday communication. One parent further suggested that her eldest child in Grade 5 *still only knows colours and numbers after five years.* Finally one parent felt *every child must learn their own language* while another parent would rather children *use time for 'basics' and* that language *should be kept for secondary school where children have a choice.*

When asked if they would encourage their child to study Italian at secondary school. Just over two thirds of parents stated they would do so. Although thirteen of these parents did not state the reason for their choice, eleven felt that *having skills in a second language* [was] *a good idea* because it was *handy to have a second language* as *a good sound knowledge of a second language is benefit for anyone* because *the more languages the better, and,* as one parent pointed out, *regardless of background a third language is a bonus.* Five parents felt that having their child learning Italian at secondary school *could be beneficial,* it was also *good for their future* because it would be good *for translations* and *better for jobs.* Only four parents identified family background as the reason for their choice, they were of *Italian background* and felt their child could *communicate with family and others* and so have *better communication with grandparents.* Two parents would support their child studying Italian at secondary school because it was *important for continuity as students will progressively improve* while one parent thought that studying at secondary school would help their child *understand the culture.*

Overall, five parents stated that the decision to continue study at secondary school had to be the child's choice. These parents suggested that *if the children chose [they] would support the decision* and it was really *up to the child* because as one parent pointed out *in secondary school there is a choice of five languages.*

Of those who do did not support their child studying Italian at secondary school four felt it was not necessary and two parents *would prefer* [their] *child to study* [their] *own language.* Others did not give reasons.

Support

Parents were asked if there was any way in which they could support and enrich the Italian program and although eight parents stated their willingness to do so, only one of them provided an example of the ways in which they could provide this support and suggested they could provide support by helping with the homework and practising.

Classroom observation

Below we record classroom observations carried out on three separate occasions, two in 1998 and one in 1999. These observations are selected from a larger sample and include one session with each of the teachers that has been involved with the program since the study began.

Observation One — Teacher A

Composite grade A – 3/4/5 – 25 learners

According to the teacher this group was extremely unmotivated and disruptive when she took over classes at this school at the beginning of 1998. She believes they had previously had a very dry program but also commented that the behavioural problems occurred in all areas, not just in Italian lessons. She also said things were running much more smoothly now and that learners were beginning to enjoy classes, which largely consist of cultural input in English. First impression after observing her at work with this group is that while learners respect the ground rules she has worked to establish, her tone is frequently sarcastic. She claims they are incapable of learning to use Italian; however the lesson I observed provided countless opportunities for repetitive, meaningful practice which she made no attempt to encourage.

9-10.30 a.m.

Normal Program: 1-hour language specific work, half an hour Italian through music at this time per week.

Today's Program: Learners were preparing for next week's festa, an all-day, whole school Italian cultural day held annually. Learners will take part in a series of activities (e.g. take part in a parade, dressed up as someone/something related to things Italian); those able to pay will also watch a performance of Cappuccetto Rosso by a visiting theatre group, have lasagne & gelato for lunch etc. Learners made and decorated paper masks.

Displays: *Blackboards:* display of other grades' masks with heading Le Maschere Italiane. Festoon display of sheets headed facciamo festa, on which children had coloured in photocopied outline drawing of people dressed for il Carnevale. Seven English language questions under the heading Festivals in Italy.

Other displays: *posters* – i numeri 1-20, i giorni della settimana, children's Italian poem and song texts.

Classroom Language Use: So little Italian was used that it was possible to record in writing all exchanges containing Italian words. The teacher was helping individual learners put the finishing touches on their masks with special paint:

1 *T: I'd like you to tell me in Italian, so you'll have to use a colour you know.*
L: Blu.
T: OK, this dark one?
L: Yes.

2 *L: Can I choose the colour?*
T: If you can tell me in Italian you can.
L: Gallo.
T: (laughing) No, that's a rooster.
L: I dunno...gello.
T: Giallo, yellow is giallo. Anyway, you've learned a new word: rooster.

3 *L: Can I have giallo stripes?*
T: Yes. How do you say that in Greek?
L: I don't know.
T: See, you can say something in Italian that you can't say in Greek.
L: I think it's.XXXXXX or something.
T: What is it ?
L: XXXXXX
T: That's a funny sound.

4 *T: What did you do Sinan?*
L: I put it there, it's finished.
T: I hope you said scusi or permesso. Is your name on it? (Sinan had leant across me to put his mask on the table.)
L: Yes. Don't you want them on the table when they're finished?
T: Yeah, yeah, clean up and sit on the floor.

5 *L: Can I have black dots please ?*
T: What's that in Italian? What's black?
L: I forget.
T: You did that in Art.
L: I don't remember.
T: Should I send you to Miss XXX?
L: No ! She'll shout at me.
T: You don't know nero. Miss XXX will be very upset when I tell her.

At one stage two girls from another class came in to ask the teacher about an information form they had been given for the festa day. One of them wanted to know how she could order a cappuccino and pointed to the reference to the live performance of Cappuccetto Rosso. The teacher told her she was a "goose" and laughingly explained that Cappuccetto is not something to drink. She then addressed an Italian background learner in the class:

T: What's Cappuccetto ?
L: A head thing.
T: Yeah, hood.

The teacher also made the following comments as she worked with learners:

Bravo
Finito? (used twice)
Nome?
Cosa? (used twice)
Nice to hear all the grazie everywhere.
Questa?
Oh mannaggia!
Grazie! (sarcastic prompt used twice)
Wow! Grazie Miss
Avanti (used twice)

There was no other Italian used by teacher or learners in the whole one and a half-hour session.

Comments

- astonishingly small amount of Italian used
- poor language modelling e.g. "What's Capuccetto" instead of "Che cosa vuol dire Capuccetto?"
- the teacher's tendency to use sarcasm as a disciplinary technique obviously works for her, but it is unfortunate when at times it encroaches on cultural matters (see 3 above)
- the lesson presented many unexploited opportunities for meaningful input, practice and reinforcement; the teacher's negative attitude with regard to learner potential obviously conditions her "minimalist" approach.
- the teacher did draw on the knowledge of one of the Italian background learners in the class but even with this learner used single words rather than a whole phrase in Italian.

Observation Two

Teacher B

Composite Grade C 4/5 – 30 learners

1.15 – 2.15 p.m.

Normal Program: one hour per week for Italian through Art.

Today's Program: following up on a theme raised by the previous day's festa program, learners were applying a sponged water wash background to paper, using blue, green, white and yellow to create a background onto which, in next week's lesson, they will apply paper cut-out gondola shapes. Only the last twenty-five minutes of this lesson were observed.

Displays: Learners' work covered every wall and was displayed in hanging festoons from the ceiling. There were:

- posters of shapes created from pasta glued to card
- paper plates painted like ceramic plates
- posters made with potato stamps on the "strega" theme
- Italian flags – some huge – on paper and on material
- paper hats decorated with Italian symbols
- single colour posters bearing the appropriate word in Italian
- one colour capital letter poster strings making up the words for various colours in Italian
- paper and pipe cleaner spiders; on a nearby white board was the word ragno

Classroom language use: For the first 15 minutes observed, learners were happily painting and chatting in English. I was free to roam and talk to them – while the ones I spoke with (about 10) responded readily to English language questions about what they were making and about the previous day's festa activities, they were generally reluctant to reply to simple Italian language questions about colour. In this phase of the lesson no Italian words were heard from teacher or learners.

The last ten minutes of the lesson were for packing up and playing Italian word games. A learner of Italian background suddenly began counting very loudly and slowly from one to ten. Obviously an established signal, this had all learners except those chosen to clean up quickly seated in silence on the floor in front of the teacher. The teacher then asked English language questions about colours and techniques used for about three minutes. Initial learner responses were as follows:

L1: I used verde and blu and went up and down for a good effect.
L2: I used dark blu, giallo, verde scuro and bianco for the light.
T: Hang on, what did you say, how do you know scuro ?
L2: Because I'm Italian.
T: Good, that's how we say "dark".
L3: I used verde.
T: Verde what ? How do you say "dark green"?
L3: Scuro. Scuro verde.
T: Yes. Good.

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Four learners who spoke subsequently picked up on this and included scuro to describe a colour, consistently using it in the wrong position. No correction or new modelling from the teacher.

The final minutes were spent playing the game "Chi sono io?" (one learner has back to group, someone says these words, learner has to guess who, saying "Tu sei Bradley?" etc. others answer "sí" or "no".) On the third round the teacher reminded them not to say "yes" :

-T: Did you say "yes"? It's "yes" – all practise that.

After this there was a mixed "yes" "sì" group response, with "sì" predominating.

When the bell rang, English language instructions were given.

Comments

- the only Italian used occurred in the last ten minutes of the lesson
- single words rather than whole phrases were used
- some attempt made to encourage learner use of target language but this seemed to be incidental to the lesson rather than central to it
- poor language model presented (" Verde what?" from the teacher).

Observation Three **Teacher A**

Composite grade D – Prep (17) / 1 (7) – 24 learners

1.15-2.15 p.m.

Normal program: I hour language specific work , 15 min. break, then half an hour Italian through music at this time per week.

Today's program: Learners were starting a new story Giacco e il Fagiolo, to be completed next week.

Displays: Blackboards – as for previous lessons observed in this room, with the addition of two lists of sentences / words. A drawn face, closely resembling the teacher's, headed one list:

Ciao.
Sono Marie.
Sono bella.
Sono intelligente.

The second was headed Ecco i Ragazzi:

piccola
contenta
alto
modesto
bugiardo
timida
brava

in ritardo
forte
bella
brutta
intelligente
simpatico

Small posters on wall: each with a word / phrase :

mi chiamo...
bene
male
come stai ?
come ti chiami ?
Picture of Pinocchio

Classroom Language Use:

Introduction: The teacher explained my presence, learners greeted me in Italian. She then told them they'd be starting a new story but first would sing the Buon Giorno song – vigorous rendering with hand actions – children obviously enjoyed this. Next she asked English language questions about the Lygon St. festa – "Who went?" "What did you do " "What did you see?" etc., guiding the children to talk about food, decorations. When a child mentioned seeing Pinocchio and the teacher said she hadn't seen him there, a second learner said perhaps he'd hidden because he thought she was a dragon. This provoked the only Italian used in this 10-minute segment, when the teacher said "What? Non ti voglio più!"

Story: The teacher played the tape, holding the book up for learners to see pictures and words. After each page the tape was stopped and learners were asked English language questions. Sometimes their English answers were accepted then translated into Italian. Exchanges containing Italian words were as follows:

1 T: Yes, he has a hat. Who else had a hat ?
L: The snowman.
T: Yes, the snowman; what did we call him ?
L: (after 10 seconds of silence) *Pupazzo.*
T: Where does he live?

2 T: Now what do we know about Giacco ?
L: There's a *topolino* there.
T: So there is, I didn't see that before. What do we know about him ?
L: He hasn't got a Mum.
T: *Non ha mamma,* what else ?
L: He hasn't got a father.

T: Non ha papà.
L: He's got a bean.
T: Quello è il fagiolo. Non ha casa. What's that mean? I'll give you a clue it's not "a cousin".
L: House.
T: Bravo!

3 L: That's his Mum.
T: It's not his mother: non ha mamma.

4 T: What's this ?
L: A dog.
T: We call it un cane.
L: Un cane is gonna eat the cat.

5 T: Come on, you can read with him.
Ls chorus: TOC! TOC ! Chi è?
(Some learners try to read with the narrator)

6 T: What's this ?
L: A horse.
T: Un cavallo. What's he gonna eat? Il cane !

7 L: There's a rat.
T: Il topo.

Some learners spontaneously repeated the following words as they listened :

- casa
- gatto
- agiolo
- cane
- cavallo
- rosso
- bianco
- giallo
- cattivo

The teacher also used the following during this segment :

- Oh che schifo!
- Silenzio! Listening to me ! (x 2)
- Oh poverino!
- Grazie.

There was no pre-teaching of relevant vocabulary, no encouragement to repeat new words.

Story Follow-up: Learners were given a photocopied line drawing of Giacco to colour in and were told the story would finish next week. On the drawing they were to write the heading Giacco e il Fagiolo, copying from the board. The teacher said she'd go around and hear them each read the heading to her, but didn't. During this segment she also asked individual learners to identify their masks on the blackboard display and returned them to them. The teacher in this segment used the following Italian words.

- Remember il nome so we know who you are.
- Grazie ! (x 12) (always a sarcastic prompt, only two learners then repeated the word.)
- Scusami! (sarcastic prompt)
- Avanti!
- Molto brava!
- Permesso (x 11) (while leaning over learners to remove masks from BB)
- Prego (x 3)
- Bravo!
- Questo?
- Questa?
- Mamma mia! (one learner repeated this)

While colouring in learners chatted in English. The following Italian words were heard; there may have been a few others undetected – the noise level was quite high.

- il fagiolo (x 2)
- il pupazzo

Conclusion: The teacher attracted learners' attention by clapping her hands and calling out loudly Guardate a me! She then silently modelled hand movements that the children copied in silence for 30 seconds. The children then sat on the floor and handed in their drawings. For the final 10 minutes they listened to the teacher read two shorter stories that they had done previously : Sogni d'oro and La Colomba. During the first, about 8 learners tried to read with the teacher but couldn't keep up. Most learners made hand gestures as previously taught to mark counting 1-10. The teacher asked once "che numero?" She also asked in English who'd eaten Italian food at the school festa the previous week and who'd played bocce there. Two PA announcements interrupted the story. When the teacher read the second story most learners read/recited with her. She finished by saying "It's not Easter any more, what's coming soon?" and, when a learner said "Christmas" she answered "Il Natale"

Comments

- during the new story phase there was a slightly higher incidence of Italian use in this lesson; the teacher used a couple of whole phrases in Italian rather than single words in her English sentences, the children spontaneously repeated more words while listening to the story. Language learning opportunities were not, however, exploited. There was no pre-teaching of relevant vocabulary, the tape was never replayed etc.
- during the masks collection phase the teacher used a lot of relevant single words, but did not encourage learners to use Italian – a pity, as it was a perfect opportunity for some one-on-one work.
- The re-reading of old stories evoked a good learner response, but had just one story been done more slowly, learners could have been encouraged to use Italian more.

Observation Four — Teacher C

Gr. 5-6 – 25 students

9am-10am

Topic: Le piante

The teacher is not able to work in own class (Art Room) on Fridays so the lessons are regularly taken in the students' own classroom. The was no evidence of Italian display and/or work in the classroom and the teacher carried what was needed with her. This was the first lesson of new topic on "Plants".

Greeting routine was done in Italian by teacher and students, I was introduced to the class in English but Italian title Signorina was used by the teacher and students used Italian greeting and title Buongiorno signorina Aliani.

The explanation of what was going to take place during the lesson was done in English with the exception of the title Le piante. So a mixture if English and Italian was used "This book is called Le piante, what do you think it means?" The description of the book's contents was also done in English.

The teacher identified the focus of the lesson – flowers – and asked students (again in English) if they knew what some of the parts of a flower were called in English.

A large poster of a flower was shown and students were told they were going to label it in Italian but first they would be told what the different parts were called in Italian. The teacher mentioned that some words were similar to English. Vocabulary cards were shown (Italian words), the teacher read the word/s in Italian: stame, pistillo, foglia, gemma, ovario, petalo, stelo, radice principale, radichetta, and one for which the teacher did not have a card nervature. Students repeated each word after the teacher. The teacher mispronounced some of the words and so students repeated wrong pronunciation.

Radice – Stress was on "a" instead of "i"
Stelo – Pronounced "stello"

Students were keen to identify the parts on the poster but there was no questioning to elicit an Italian response from them. The teacher read each card in Italian and students said what it was in English and the teacher then placed the labels on the poster.

When the card with gemma was read out, the teacher suggested that "if you know a Gemma in the school you can tell her what her name means". When some students giggled and said "Oh, bud!?" the teacher suggested it was something nice because she would turn into a flower.

Students were asked to label a worksheet and include the title Il fiore. Students were instructed to label their work, have it checked by the teacher and then they could colour in their worksheet.

The poster (with labels) was placed on the board and students started to work on their worksheet. As they finished labelling, they went to the teacher who ticked their work or suggested they check some words. Students were not asked to read out their work and no questioning was involved in this part of the lesson. However, comments such as Eccellente, Bravo, Brava, Bene, were written on some students' work. Students worked very quietly and quickly and overall there seemed to have a positive attitude.

When all students had completed their work, they were asked who wanted to come to the front of the room and label the poster (if done correctly the student would receive a raffle ticket). A number of students labelled the poster but all of them had 1-2 wrong labels. The teacher was very positive and acknowledged students for trying. Again the teacher and the students did all of the work in English.

A quick game of Sono io! was played in the last five minutes of the lesson. Students used Italian in the game.
Student 1: Sono io! (Attempting to disguise voice)_
Class:Uno, due, tre.
Student 2: Tu sei ... (Taking 3 turns at guessing who Student 1 was)

Comment

There was an exceedingly small amount of Italian used during this lesson by the teacher and students and what was presented was really at the single word stage. No opportunities were provided for interaction in the LOTE. There was no recycling of language or pre-writing activities where students could become familiar with the content. It seems such a pity that an interesting subject could be presented this way. It seems to me that the session did not provide a good LOTE model but also it was not really a good "English" lesson since it did not challenge them cognitively nor extend their linguistic skills in any obvious way.

Case Studies

Four case studies are presented below, two of Italian background learners (one male and one female) and two of learners from English speaking backgrounds. These case studies have been randomly selected from a larger sample. Pseudonyms are given for each of the students to ensure confidentiality.

Case Study One

Student Profile

Name: "Elena"
Age: 12
Grade: 6
Place of birth: Australia
Travelled to Italy: No
Mother's birthplace: Australia
Father's birthplace: N/A
Languages spoken at home: Mainly English

Elena lives at home with her mother and older brother. The family generally speaks English. The mother sometimes speaks Italian or dialect (Sicilian) with others but not with her children. The mother has studied Italian at school and can speak standard Italian but because she is conscious of the possibility of dialect interference she has decided not to speak in Italian/dialect to Elena and her brother. Sometimes Elena will say simple Italian words to her grandparents and they sometimes will speak Italian to her but they tend to switch from Italian to English.

Elena rarely reads and only occasionally writes in Italian. Elena uses Italian at school and with her extended family or relatives visiting from overseas. She started Italian in Prep and has continued studying the language through to Grade 6.

Elena talks about the Italian program and what they are learning to her mother and sometimes to her brother who is studying Italian and Indonesian at secondary school.

Elena does not enjoy her Italian classes because she finds them too easy and thinks they should learn a bit more. She feels that at times they just colour in and some of the worksheets are not very good.

Self-rating of ability

Listening: Elena feels she can understand some of what her family or relatives say in Italian.

Speaking: She can speak some Italian if the other people help her and listen carefully.

Reading: Elena can understand most of what she reads but sometimes needs help.

Writing: She knows how to write in Italian but it is difficult for her.

Elena believes that she could speak to people in Italian if they spoke no English, she could greet people, would be able buy things in Italian and also knows a bit about Italian culture.

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Before Elena started studying Italian at school, she remembers hearing her nonno and nonna speaking Italian so she had some familiarity with the language. Coming to school has extended that knowledge. She knew just a few words when she started in Prep and now she feels she knows more words and puts sentences together better. She also feels that in writing she can sound the words out and it's easier.

Elena does not speak Italian to other people beyond her family and although she is aware of the differences between standard Italian and dialect, she uses "pure" Italian. She seems to be interested in language learning and she looks up in the dictionary to learn new Italian words.

Elena considers that it is better to know two languages rather than one because if you know two languages and children come to school you can help them understand. She does not watch Italian videos but some times watches Italian movies with subtitles and even if she does not read very much in Italian she does have Italian books and dictionaries. Elena seems to enjoy Italian /Art.

Elena believes that through the program she has learned a little about Italian culture, she has learned about Carnival, about what Italians eat and there was an Italian Day at the school. She thinks that the program has enhanced her cultural identity and made her feel good about being Italian, it feels normal. She also knows more because she has an Italian background and she is aware of being able to pronounce things better than the other kids – not in an Aussie way.

Some years ago, Elena was enrolled in another Italian program (Saturday mornings) and even if it was hard because

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they did many tests, she feels she learned a lot more than she does in her current classes and she liked the program. She stopped going because she became involved in sports.

Parent feedback

Elena's mother has studied Italian and can speak it although she was born in Australia. She has chosen not to speak to Elena and her older brother in Italian because she is very conscious of mixing Sicilian dialect and Italian.

The school was selected because the older brother had gone there and had been happy at the school. Elena's mother is not certain of the purpose and content of the Italian program but she believes students should have a basic understanding of the language. She is not really happy with the program because students are not learning the basics.

According to her mother, Elena is very frustrated with the program because she thinks she should know more and believes she should know how to speak, she is very hungry for knowledge.

Elena's mother believes knowing a second language (particularly Italian) is important . She has noticed Elena's strong interest in learning languages, in travelling to Italy and in learning more about Italian culture. She does not know whether this has come about as a result of the program or whether it is due to other factors.

Teacher

Elena's teacher feels this program strengthens vocabulary knowledge, expands cultural knowledge and exposes Elena to the written language and its rules.

Her teacher feels she is able to do the work required of her but is not a very keen participant and exhibits a moody personality and attitude.

She rates her abilities as follows:

Listening: Good understanding

Speaking: Competent speaking

Reading: Needs improvement

Writing: Competent at vocabulary

Elena's teacher feels she would benefit from more exposure to spoken Italian. She is not certain about Elena's performance in other Key Learning Areas but considers she is good at Art.

Summary

It seems that Elena is quite frustrated by her lack of progress in Italian and unfortunately at school this has been put down as poor attitude. There seems to be parental support for learning a second language and a keen interest on Elena's part. It is unfortunate that she feels the program is not extending her and catering for her needs.

Case Study Two

Student Profile

Name: "Jorge"
Age: 12
Grade: 6
Place of birth: Brazil
Travelled to Italy: Yes
Mother's birthplace: Brazil
Father's birthplace: Brazil
Languages spoken at home: Portuguese, Italian and English

Jorge lives at home with his mother and father. The family came from Brazil two years ago and generally speaks Portuguese. Because of the parents' background, Italian is also spoken and some English.

Although Portuguese is his first language, Jorge is often spoken to and speaks Italian and he always reads and writes in Italian. Apart from home, he uses Italian at school, with friends and with his extended family. Jorge spent 1 month in Italy before coming to Australia.

Jorge has been studying Italian since Grade 2, in Australia for the last two years and in Brazil from 1993 to 1997. In San Paolo he did talking and writing in Italian and the program was similar to here.

Jorge likes his Italian classes and has no difficulties learning Italian. He appears to have a very good understanding and knowledge of Italian and believes learning Italian helps [him] learn a LOTE and [he] understands a lot.

Self -rating of ability

Listening: Jorge can understand everything people tell him in Italian.
Speaking: He feels very comfortable speaking Italian.
Reading: He understands everything he reads.
Writing: He can write very well in Italian.

Jorge finds language learning easy and thinks Italian is similar to Portuguese. Although he enjoys the classes he does not talk about the program much and one thing he dislikes is doing things that [he] already knows.

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Jorge believes the program has helped a lot to improve [his] Italian language because he learns, new Italian words. Jorge does not speak Italian as much as he used to because now he knows English. However he speaks Italian with his family, both here and overseas and with his Italian neighbours.

Jorge is very language-aware and has a strong interest in learning languages. His command and understanding of English is very good considering he did not know the language prior to his arrival and has only been in Australia a short period of time. He would like to speak more languages including French and Spanish so he could be a teacher or a translator when [he] grows up.

Jorge watches Italian news and programs on TV, he sometimes listens to the radio but does not watch too many Italian videos because many are already in English.

Jorge has learned about Italian culture because he has learned some geography, how they live in Italy, some of the things they do and how there are lots of dialects.

Although Jorge feels Brazilian first and Italian second, he says he feels Italian because [his] background is Italian. He has been to Italy and would like to go again and perhaps when his father returns to Brazil to see his grandfather they may go to Italy.

Jorge feels quite comfortable learning Italian, he thinks it is like in Brazil and learning Italian is great. He feels learning Italian will help him in the future.

Parent feedback

Jorge's parents were born in Brazil but are both of Italian background. The came to Australia two years ago and generally speak Portuguese, Italian and some English. The actual interview was conducted in Italian because Jorge's father felt more comfortable speaking in that language. According to his father Jorge understands a lot of Italian and speaks a bit, he uses Italian with neighbours, when shopping, with his family and shows a real interest in learning languages.

The school was selected because it is near and Jorge's father is happy with the Italian program. He expects it will teach Jorge to write and speak in Italian that he believes is good for Jorge's future. He believes Jorge is happy with the program because everything is new.

Jorge does watch Italian TV and writes to his relatives overseas, he shows and interest in travelling to Italy and if he went back to Brazil, he would join an Italian Club. Jorge's father believes that his son feels both, Portuguese and Italian, depending who he is with.

Teacher

Jorge's Italian teacher sees him as a quiet achiever who participates and responds well. Because he has good skills he likes Italian. His teacher feels that more participation and contribution could improve his performance and progress.

Listening: Good

Speaking: Needs to participate more.

Reading: Very good

Writing: Extra work needed

Jorge is very creative in Art.

Summary

Jorge appears to be a very confident and competent student. He uses Italian extensively, immerses himself, and seems to really enjoy speaking the language. He is very aware and interested in languages and his background and parents interest support this. At school, although Jorge's positive attitude and skills have been noted, it is not clear how opportunities for his increased participation and contribution are going to occur given the low demands made on students' language skills. A student such as this one will need to be given extension activities (e.g. writing task tailored to his level of ability and interests) if he is to maintain and build on his current Italian language skills.

Case Study Three

Student Profile

Name: "Jason"
Age: 9
Grade: 4
Place of birth: Australia
Travelled to Italy: No
Mother's birthplace: Australia
Father's birthplace: Australia
Languages spoken at home: English

Jason lives at home with his mother, father and two brothers. All three boys attend the same school. Only English is spoken at home.

Jason is rarely spoken to in Italian and he rarely speaks, reads or writes in Italian. The only place where he uses Italian is at school. Although he says he does not find studying Italian difficult, he is emphatic about not enjoying Italian and says that there is nothing that he likes about it.

Self-rating of ability

Listening: Jason believes he can understand most of the Italian he hears.

Speaking: He can speak some Italian.

Reading: Jason can understand a bit of what he reads.

Writing: He can write some Italian.

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Jason thinks language learning is OK and a bit of fun.

He does not speak Italian with his family or friends nor does he use Italian in other contexts apart from school. Jason's only exposure to Italian books is through the Italian program, the ones read by the teacher.

Jason feels the program has given him some understanding of Italian culture because they have learned how to say some words and how to write some words. He feels the program would help him a bit if he travelled to Italy because he knows how to say "ciao".

Parent feedback

Jason and his family only speak English at home. He knew no Italian before he started the program and he has been learning since Prep. The school was chosen because it was near.

Jason's mother does not have high expectations about the program and although she thinks it is fine, she also feels it takes time out from other subjects.

She thinks that in general the children are indifferent to the program, especially at the higher levels of schooling but she finds it interesting to hear the youngest one come home and get excited about the new words he has learned.

Jason's mother says her children appear not to hate Italian but they don't talk about it much at home. They are more interested in Italian/Art.

As a result of the program, Jason's mother believe he shows a little more interest in learning languages and knows more about Italian culture than if he had not done the program.

Teacher

According to his teacher Jason is an enthusiastic learner.

Listening: Understands

Speaking: Needs to contribute more in class.

Reading: Average.

Writing: Could do better. Does not write words correctly 100% of the time.

Jason's teacher is not sure about his progress and performance in other Key Learning Areas but believes he is OK in Art.

Summary

It appears that Jason either dislikes Italian or at most thinks it is OK. From the mother's description, the only child who still gets excited about learning new Italian words is the youngest son who is in Prep.

The teacher has identified no strategies so that Jason can improve his writing skills. His negative attitude and lack of interest in the subject does not seem to have been noticed by the teacher.

Case Study Four

Student Profile

Name: "Angela"
Age: 10
Grade: 5
Place of birth: Australia
Travelled to Italy: No
Mother's birthplace: Australia
Father's birthplace: Australia
Languages spoken at home: English

Angela lives at home with her mother, father, twin brother and one older brother. English is the language spoken at home by the family.

Angela is rarely spoken to in Italian and she rarely speaks, reads or writes in Italian. She only uses Italian at school and has been learning Italian since Prep. She has only been at this school for two years.

Angela likes her Italian classes and likes speaking a little bit of Italian, but finds this difficult

Self-rating of ability

Listening: Angela feels she can understand some Italian.

Speaking: She can speak some Italian.

Reading: She can understand some of what she reads.

Writing: Angela can write some Italian.

Angela finds language learning fun but a little bit hard. She finds some of the work like writing dictionary work difficult because she does not know the words.

Angela talks about the program to her family and sometimes they try to help because they know a bit of Italian. Angela likes to learn languages and would like to travel to Italy, she reads Italian books and feels she knows about Italian culture because she knows how to read, write a bit and speak.

Sociocultural and attitudinal knowledge

Angela feels the program has helped her communicate with her family because she practices at home and parents help. She sometimes uses Italian outside the school context just with some friends who are Italian. She really likes to learn Italian but is not really interested in learning other languages.

Angela feels she has learned about Italian culture because through the program they have learned about places and how people lived in the past and now.

She feels the program has increased her readiness to travel by teaching [her] to talk to the people, knowing what they like to do and eat and by being able to read in Italian.

Angela feels she is enjoying the Italian more at this school than at her previous school because they did not do anything in Italian before.

Parent feedback

Although English is the language spoken by the family, Angela's older brother is learning French at secondary school and the twins sometimes "muck around" in Italian.

The school was not selected because of its Italian program but Angela's parents were aware of the LOTE program when they enrolled her. Angela's previous school also had an Italian program.

Angela's mother hopes that the program will get the children to a point where they will be able to speak in Italian – sometimes the twins speak between themselves in Italian.

Angela's mother is happy with the program, she wants her children to have a second language and happy for it to be Italian because it is so widely spoken in the local community. She feels her children are happy with the program they are "like sponges" and will pick the language up very fast.

As a result of the program, Angela's mother feels her children use Italian to communicate between themselves when they play school and sometimes they will use Italian to speak to people outside the home. They have an interest in learning languages and have learned a bit of Japanese as well. They will occasionally watch movies on SBS.

Angela's mother feels the children know about Italian culture because their grandmother tells them about their great-great-grandmother who was Italian. Although she doubts that the program makes them "feel Italian" she is conscious of them having picked up certain mannerisms and hand movements from the teacher.

Teacher

Angela's teacher thinks Angela is a quiet and conscientious student who always completes her work. She rates her language ability as follows:

Listening: Understands words in Italian.

Speaking: Needs to improve contribution within the program.

Reading: Very good.

Writing: very good.
She believes Angela's performance and progress could be improved if she participated a bit more.

CONTINUED ☛

Summary

It seems that Angela really enjoys learning Italian and also other languages. She seems keen to use Italian in role-play situations and attempts to use the language with friends. She is keen to learn about the culture and her background may give her a further incentive. The parents seem happy with the program in general and see its importance in terms of its links with the community. It is interesting that the children are keen on using Italian spontaneously outside the classroom, but that the teacher finds Angela reluctant to speak in class. Lesson observations suggest that the fault may lie with the Italian teachers who need to develop strategies to encourage greater levels of language production by the students.

Overview of Program D

What is striking about Program D is the extent of the school community's acceptance of commitment to the Italian Program on the one hand and, on the other, the minimal amount of target language exposure the children were receiving along with a somewhat diluted or "Mickey Mouse" approach to teaching Italian culture. The Vice-Principal appears to be proud of the program and supportive to the point of being prepared to take extra classes in order to secure some time release for the LOTE teacher. Parents seem by and large to be in favour of the program, even though many of them speak languages other than Italian or English at home and might have objected to the program on the grounds that learning a LOTE takes too much time away from English or other schools subjects (those expressing such views were a very small minority). Both Italian and non-Italian background parents seemed very happy that the school was teaching the children about the Italian culture. However quite a number of parents confessed to knowing very little about the Italian program and the reason they are "happy" with it may be that they didn't (with one or two notable exceptions) have high expectations of linguistic achievement. Some of the learners have mixed feelings about the program but, overall, they seem at worst indifferent and at best well-disposed to studying Italian and in some cases quite confident about their language skills (although it was unclear what kind of benchmark they were applying to make their estimate). Only a handful expressed disappointment in or frustration with respect to what the program was offering them. That there were so few disenchanted students or parents is somewhat mysterious when one views the classroom observation schedules which provide objective and quantifiable data indicating that the amount of Italian use by the teacher was negligible and when one observes from the transcripts the many missed opportunities for using Italian and for eliciting such use from the students. The opportunities for language-learning were minimal and it is therefore hardly surprising that learners have not moved beyond the stage of producing isolated words. This state of affairs is all the more unfortunately when we consider that a large proportion of the population have good receptive skills and in some cases spoken fluency as a result of their own exposure to Italian within the immediate or extended family. If these students' skills were harnessed they could be used as valuable language resource, and initiatives such as cross-age tutoring, which would expand their own language repertoire as well as that of their peers, could be encouraged.

Why do the teachers use so little Italian even though they have in at least two of the three cases been professionally trained in second teaching methodology? The fact that this phenomenon occurred with both the 1998 and 1999 classes in spite of a change of teachers from one year to the next teacher suggests that the practice of using English rather than Italian as a medium of instruction may be not uncommon in mainstream LOTE classrooms. The answer may have to do the LOTE teachers' lack of confidence about their language skill (which may perhaps be exacerbated when they are observed by outsiders), that they do not believe their learners have the capacity to acquire Italian (See comment from Teacher A) or that they see "doing Italian" as something independent of language (and this is particularly true in the Art lessons with Teacher B where the focus is on painting pictures and where use of the Italian language – colours- is peripheral to the classroom activity). The Italian teachers themselves after all have grown up in a community which does not see language as a "core value" or as integral to its cultural identity and whose members use non-standard variants of the language which tend to be stigmatized both within and outside their cultural group.

SALIENT THEMES

Italian schools A and B

We comment here further on the themes identified as salient to the study in relation to the two Italian programs:

1 **The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues.**

To varying degrees this seems to be the cases with both programs. However, it is particularly apparent with the program in School A where what comes through quite clearly with almost all of the interviews and questionnaires is that in most cases the parents and/or grandparents feel it is extremely important that the child is able to access her or his 'roots'. The notion of cultural identity and appreciation comes through much more strongly than academic considerations. Many of the parents recognise the usefulness of second language learning but for the most part they focus of the child's ability to converse and participate in the wider Italian heritage that they have. Interestingly the students are, for the most part, very aware of this aspect of their studies and many of them equate language-learning quite closely with their sense of belonging and identity. The older students appear to have made an independent and conscious decision to attend the School A program outside of any external pressure. Most students are appreciative of the fact that the program helps them communicate with grandparents (in particular) and other relatives.

This seems to be less relevant to the School B program where there appears to be little cultural content (the games are not 'Italian', nor are they depicted in Italian terminology) and no linguistic association, i.e. set phrases, grammatical structure, extra linguistic information. For the most part it appears that the Italian background students understand their 'Italian-ness' as something separate from

Italy and this is especially the case when the familial links to Italy aren't strong.

In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology.

In spite of the fact that there is a large second and third generation Italian population at School B and the research has certainly identified the value of a LOTE program that has a community base rather than just any language, little has been done to cater specifically for these students and even if they enjoy going to their LOTE class and think its fun it is of some concern that none of them found it challenging or difficult. Considerable support is provided by the organising agency - CoAsIt - but it is really left up to individual teachers to take up these professional development opportunities.

Conversely, the teacher in the School A program does cater very much for students' individual abilities and interests. Even though all students in this program are of Italian background, there is a great age difference within the group - from Year 2 to Year 9 - and a wide range of language abilities. The teacher appears to know her students well and at least three of them have specifically moved to this program to be with her. There is a definite sense that both the students and parents prefer the more grammatical approach offered at the VSL. This could possibly be a reflection of their own educative experience as Italian education tends to be overly reliant of rote learning and what more recent Australian approaches would consider traditional learning styles. At the same time all three groups; students, parents and teacher, felt that oral skills need to be improved.

2 Learner use of the target language inside and outside the classroom.

It is almost impossible to adequately assess and evaluate the students' abilities in the School B program. The use of LOTE within class time is non-existent and even the upper grades (Grade 5 & 6) students don't seem to have progressed beyond copying single words from the board or sheets. Classroom language content is entirely in English except for the occasional read-out-loud word and at no time were the students seen to attempt using the LOTE beyond a single word. There was no attempt to construct phrases either spoken or written and students' listening comprehension was impossible to evaluate. Even students whose background was L1 Italian used English in the classroom.

The students at the School A program have some exposure to Italian at home and, although this varied, they did use Italian with family and friends. The younger students seem to feel they use and are exposed to Italian more often than perhaps occurs but this is not necessarily a negative observation. They certainly all feel that the Italian speakers that they meet, either within or external to, the family group appreciate their language skills. It should be noted that the teacher uses a considerable amount of the LOTE in the classroom.

3 Social conservatism, separation and parochialism.

I don't think this is applicable to the VSL program. In the case of School B there is a strong push from the administration and the funding body that the Italian program is seen as part of the curriculum and integrates well within the school.

4 Language status, issues of language variety and ownership.

All the Italian background students identified the value they placed on knowing their 'language'. A number of parents in both programs have acknowledge their use of an Italian dialect in the home. By some parents at School B this is seen as having a negative effect on the language-learning of their children and some parents prefer to speak English with their children rather than a dialect.

5 Vulnerability of programs due to population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries.

This issue arose in the School B program where a different teacher has been employed almost on a yearly basis and the time allocation, dependent on funding received from Italy, was reduced by thirty minutes this year.

6 Organisational issues

Time-tabling and a 'crowded curriculum' seem to be issues identified at School B. These areas no longer pose a concern because of the link between LOTE and other Key Learning Areas. With a two-hour allocation, one hour is devoted to Italian Language and one hour is Italian Art. The allocation of an Italian room has been another organisational issue that needed to be addressed because with increasing student numbers a room is no longer available. For the last two to three years Italian has been linked to Art so the Art Room is used as well as LOTE sessions in the classroom.

Some of the organisational issues which arise at the School A program are due to the context in which the program is run and make it difficult to establish community involvement. There are time limitations as well as bureaucratic difficulties for example following up, reminders for homework, students have busy schedules and leave their work to the last minute. The wide range of year levels and abilities also means that students have to be really motivated and able to work independently as well as supporting each other.

7 Student attitudes and motivation issues as well as student-versus-parent notion and senses of identity.

Students in the School A program seem to be highly motivated and particularly the older students appear to have made an independent and conscious decision to attend the VSL program outside of any external pressure.

Italian at School B is part of the school curriculum and therefore all students, regardless of background attend the LOTE classes and in general the students were happy with attending LOTE and, again given the methodological approach, find it easy and not challenging.

8 Interaction between different programs and providers.

Although there is flexibility, there appears to be a close link between School A and the actual LOTE program in terms of planning, reporting and teacher selection.

Although as the funding body, CoAsIt, is very supportive of their teachers, responsibilities are in a sense divided between the school and the agency. CoAsIt has responsibility for the administrative aspect while the school is responsible for the content and integration into the school curriculum. There are very limited opportunities for CoAsIt to have input into the running of the program and this is left very much to the school.

Chinese School A and B

We comment here further on the themes identified as salient to the study (Annual Report 1998) in relation to the two Chinese programs:

1 **The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues.**

This is clearly the case in both schools. In School A parents want children to share a common understanding of the cultural values and customs that they cherish. In school B the non-Chinese parents aim to broaden their children's perspective in terms of inter-cultural understanding and inter-racial relationship, in other words to instill in their children their own social values.

In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology.

2 **Learner use of the language inside and outside the classroom.**

School A
As Target Language is not the home language of the majority of the students, the necessity for students to use Target Language outside the classroom is therefore minimal. If the use of Target Language is not insisted upon by the classroom teacher as a means of communication between teacher and students and among students for academic, social or discipline reasons within the school setting, then the program will end up not producing students who can speak the language. In School A, learners are constantly challenged to use Target Language by one specific teacher with the result that many of those who have exited from the Bilingual program by the end of Grade 2 are still ready and capable of using Target Language to communicate with another teacher or the researcher during their LOTE classes. This teacher is observed to be creating opportunities for students to experiment and test their use of the language with immediate feedback and correction that enable them to gain increasing confidence in their ability to rely less on English and their home language to make themselves understood at least inside the classroom with their peers and their teacher.

Unless this classroom environment and momentum are maintained in the upper school LOTE program, much will be lost because of the lack of practice.

School B
In school B, because of the presence of non-background students, the teacher tends to speak in English when addressing these students in order to clarify her points. Other than 'show and tell' when students are asked to talk and ask about what they are showing, the teacher puts a lot of emphasis on reciting poems, nursery rhymes and riddles.

While there is evidence that students (except the non-background) can memorise and recite many of these poems, which have rather complex characters and structures not found in everyday or familiar context, there is little evidence that students are ready to express themselves in Target Language either in speaking or in writing when they enter the Bilingual Program in the upper school. Even in the upper school there is a lack of emphasis on using Target Language in classroom discourse. Although students understand the teacher who uses Target Language in content-based instructions, they are not required or helped to use Target Language to interact with the teacher. As a result, students lack the opportunity, the will, and confidence to test what they have learned even within the classroom.

3 Social conservatism, separation & parochialism

School A

Many parents realise that having their children learn Mandarin does not necessarily help to bridge the communication gap between themselves and the children, as many can speak too little English or Mandarin to make themselves understood. However, they are comforted by a sense of pride and security because their children can share with them some common understanding of the values and customs that they so cherish. It is evident that the parents' unwavering stand on the issue is getting less and less resistance from the younger generation today .

The internationalisation of Target Language helps the young to realise that in addition to pleasing their parents, they can also increase their future job prospect as well as own standing in the community by knowing a language that is valued by those other than their own people group.

School B

Parents of non-Chinese background learners want to broaden their children's perspective in terms of inter-cultural understanding and inter-racial relationship. They see that learning a language of another cultural group at a very young age and learning as member of a racial minority within the school community is an experience which is instrumental in breaking down cultural and racial barriers between people. The Bilingual Program in School B is one which they will "fight to keep".

4 Language status, issues of language variety and 'ownership'.

There is no question that Mandarin is not only not a dying language but one that is gaining ground internationally. Its growth is linked with China's attempt to enter into the world stage as a superpower and the real possibility of its being a reality in the not so distant future. Among overseas Chinese, it is the language that most parents would like to see their children acquire despite their being born outside the motherland. Mandarin in its spoken form has an established standard that is officially recognised and used throughout the People's Republic of China known as Putonghua (language of the common people).

With the development of a romanised pinyin system that guides pronunciation and intonation, standard should be easily maintained. However, the influence of home language (dialect) of various regions of China upon putonghua speakers will affect the accuracy of the pronunciation and intonation thus creating a slight variation of Target Language which requires a new learner to adjust his/her reception of what is considered the norm. It is possible that a Chinese teacher originated from Malaysia (with Hokkien as first language) speaks with an accent different from one who comes from Hong Kong, (Cantonese) or from Shanghai (Shanghainese), Beijing (Peking dialect), Timorese (Hakka), Taiwan (Taiwanese) etc. However, it is reasonable to expect that a teacher of Mandarin (Putonghua) would aspire to achieve as near as possible to the standard established in order to present an acceptable model for his/her students while at the same time exposing students to some of its regional varieties so as to increase their listening comprehension capacity.

As for the written form, there is also a standard for good vernacular writing that overrides regional differences, using similar symbols or characters and governed by similar structure. However, the Chinese Communist government, in a move to popularise Chinese and to increase literacy, has devised a simplified script or system of characters which aims to replace the traditional and more complicated ones. Although the number of characters affected by the change is still minimal, it is enough to confuse new learners of the language as to which system they should follow.

While they are learning the simplified form in school, what they encounter in shops, newspapers, restaurants are still in the traditional forms. What if they travel to places other than mainland China such a Hong Kong and Taiwan? Should students be taught to recognise the traditional forms as well?

5 Organisational issues.

School A
As the Bilingual Program only affects a section of the student population, it produces immense pressure upon the administrators to juggle with the timetable, budget, staffing, teacher-student ratio, allocation of resources to deliver a system that is academically viable and yet administratively fair to all concerned within the school system.

The fact that the internal arrangement is also dependent on external factors such as the number of students enrolled, parental support, the availability of funds and competent bilingual teachers, makes it imperative for administers to be as adaptive, flexible, creative and diplomatic as possible to enable the program not only to survive but thrive as well. In school A, it is out of necessity that the Chinese program is in one half of the week and the English program in another half of the week, in order to resolve staffing issues, as not all teachers are employed full time. As for resources, the administrator needs to make sure that what benefits the Bilingual Program because of the special funding received from outside should benefit the rest of the school community. This is done with the view that other sections of the school that have given a lot of consideration for this program over the years can continue to exist with it side by side harmoniously.

School B
In School B, the timetable is arranged quite different with the Target Language in the lower school. Students are divided into two groups; within one school day students of each group move from a block of Chinese lessons of two hours to a block of English lessons, thus have the opportunity of being immersed in both languages on a daily basis. It is hard to say which arrangement is better. School B can opt for this arrangement because it has the advantage of having two full-time teachers at the lower school and the number of students enrolled is small, about 20-25 in total from Prep to Grade 2.

However the small number of students means that they have to be grouped into one composite class with various levels of language proficiency both in English and Chinese.

6 Student attitudes and student motivation issues as well as student versus parental notions and senses of identity.

School A
It is relatively easy to stimulate and maintain student interest to learn a new language through songs, games and other hands-on activities in the lower primary school. In addition, the pressure from the parents whether in the form of encouragement, enticement or coercion, propels students to make some efforts towards learning the Target Language. Thus dramatic progress can be observed among many of the learners who take pride in their ability to speak, recognise characters and to write short stories. However, enthusiasm wanes when Target Language becomes a peripheral subject in the curriculum as they exit from the Bilingual program into LOTE that offers few new things to learn except to maintain what they already know. Progress over the next few years in school is slow and it is difficult for learners to draw from their learning process the sense of pride and excitement over the minimal linguistic

advancement they can achieve. It is interesting to note that many parents try to make up for this gap by enrolling their children in the community language school which make use of the same premises on weekends.

School B

Although School B offers Bilingual Program up to Year 6, it is surprising to find that students do not make significant progress in Target Language despite the extra years. There are a few possible reasons:

a With grades 3, 4, 5 and 6, students who are of various proficiency levels being put into one class because of the small number of students opting to continue in the program in the upper school, it is extremely difficult for the teacher to find the appropriate teaching focus. There is a demand for individual attention as well as progressive materials that require time and expertise to develop.

b because the school cannot afford to get funding to support a .6 staff, the bilingual class has to be combined with the LOTE class for 3 hours out of the 8 hours per week allotted to Chinese lessons per week. Although the combined class enables the bilingual students to peer-teach the LOTE students, it deprives them of the time they need to develop their language skills (writing in particular) in a more focussed learning environment. It is virtually impossible to get individual attention from the teacher in a Bilingual composite class combined with a LOTE composite class.

c) The class composition and class structure make it very difficult for the teacher to adopt an approach that is driven by learning outcomes. Moreover, the conflict between content-based and language-based teaching is evident. At the upper primary level, students are developing abstract thinking and are learning concepts that require the use of more complex language that is beyond the current proficiency level of these students. The teacher is faced with the questions: is there any value in teaching them scientific terms in Target Language which they will not need in their secondary schooling? Should more time be spent on encouraging them to express Target Language in everyday language instead of rushing through the Key Learning Areas in Target Language . On the other hand, students are faced with the question: should I be bothered with learning a long list of vocabulary that I will never use while living and working in Australia?

7 Issues of home language and school (English) language development.

School A

Among the case studies in School A, there are hardly any parents who show any concern for their children's progress in English despite the fact that they are spending less time learning English than the mainstream students. They believe that it is more likely that their children will forget their Chinese than English because they are living in an English-speaking environment. As they have observed, English is gradually replacing their home language in the verbal interaction among siblings, and these parents are more worried about the impact of an abrupt and drastic reduction of hours spent in Chinese from 10 hours to 2.5 hours at the end of Grade 2.

School B

Similarly in School B, Chinese parents enroll their children in the Bilingual Program because of the intensity of Chinese-learning in the program. Only one parent interviewed is concerned with the differences in the standard of English between students of bilingual and mainstream programs. She wants the school to reassure her that there is no negative and long-term impact upon her child's ability to compete academically at the secondary school level.

Parents of non-Chinese background students are also not worried about their children's progress in English, they believe that they can give their children ample support at home to supplement and reinforce what they are learning at school. However, they feel frustrated that they cannot do the same to help their children in learning Target Language because of their lack of knowledge of Target Language and of bilingual supportive resources that are made available to them. They can see that language-learning for the primary school age requires substantial parental support and encouragement to make it successful.

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APPENDIX 1 – ETHNIC AFTER HOURS SCHOOL (CHINESE)

Interview with the school principal

NB The school conducts its classes on every Saturday afternoon to 4:30 pm during school terms.

Date: May 1, 1999.	**Interviewer:** Irene Liem
How long has your school been established?	it has been in existence for more than a decade.
What do you see as the value of its existence?	Despite the opening of many new community language schools specialised in Mandarin and the introduction of LOTE (Chinese) in both government and private schools, our school is still attracting many students. In the current Target Language there are more than 200 students enrolled from Kindergarten to VCE levels. Many of these students are already taking Chinese at their day school, but their parents want them to attend our school simultaneously as they see the benefits of their children being exposed to Chinese more frequently and more extensively.
What are the special features of your school compared to community language schools in Victoria?	What makes us different from other comparison schools is our continued use of traditional script as the basis of our teaching. Parents who send their children to our school are happy that they are learning to read and write the traditional script. However, we are under increasing pressure to change to simplified form in accordance with directives of the Department of Education. At the moment, our teachers are still using the traditional script but are also helping students to recognise the corresponding simplified form. Most students are found to be able to cope with both without getting too confused. It is important for students doing VCE to avoid using both forms in the same assessment task or exam paper as it is not an acceptable practice.
What is the approach adopted by your school in the teaching of Chinese to schoolchildren in Victoria?	We are quite aware of the differences in the approach between our school and the average day school. We feel that there is much merit in our direct teaching method. By using a fixed textbook for each level, both students and parents are able to follow the syllabus systematically. There is a clear guideline and expected outcomes and consequently students feel that they are learning something concrete if they follow teacher instruction and discipline themselves into forming good studying habits. Although teachers trained in the LOTE method would find our teaching method unimaginative or old-fashioned, we feel that memorising text and plenty of practice in character-writing will still yield long-term benefits in the learning of Chinese.
What teaching resources do you depend upon?	We are using the textbooks published in Taiwan for overseas Chinese because the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) is donating these books to our school for the students. We are aware that these books may not be locally relevant, but they do design the context with the overseas Chinese in mind. We have attempted to produce more locally relevant material, but it is found that the content is a bit too hard for the students.

APPENDIX 2 – ETHNIC AFTER HOURS SCHOOL (CHINESE)

Observation of a Year 3 Class

Date: 1/5/99	**Time:** 1:30-pm -2.30pm	**Class observed:** Class observed: Grade 3
Teacher: Ms C	**No. of students:** 25	**Observer:** Irene Liem

Purpose: to observe how Chinese is taught in the ethnic school where some of the students of Program A & B are, and to compare the approach adopted by the two different models of language maintenance program for Chinese background students

Lesson Content: Learning a new text from their prescribed reader

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Items Observed

PRESENTATION AND ORGANISATION.

T. asked Ss to take out their exercise book and to do a dictation of the text they learned last week that was about the stars. They were instructed not to look at their textbook, and to write out the passage by memory. Most of the Ss finished their dictation within 10 minutes. The majority of them were able to write out the passage with only a couple of blank spaces. After the dictation, T explained to Ss what they needed to do as homework – to draw a card with Chinese writing for Mother's Day celebration. Then she went on with a new lesson from the same textbook – the text was a riddle – the subject was 'our ears'. She first read over each sentence of the passage, and asked the whole class to repeat after her aloud five times for each sentence. She suggested that Ss should use their fingers to point at each character while reading aloud. After the first round, T asked the whole class to read the whole passage through while she listened to their pronunciation and made corrections along the way. While this was going on, some students attempted to put sound symbols (their own creation, not the officially accepted pinyin) beside the characters to guide their pronunciation. T asked the whole class to repeat reading each sentence reducing gradually from 5 times to 3 to 2 to 1 time. T always began each round with the chant one, two, three in Chinese, and the Ss responded. When T was satisfied that Ss had all mastered the reading of the text, she wrote on the board all the words that Ss were not familiar with, emphasizing the radical, the number of strokes for each character and the stroke order. She told Ss to copy that down in their book. Thereafter she displayed flashcards of all these new words, first in pinyin alone and then the characters alone. As she was displaying them, she asked the whole class to identify or say them aloud. She repeated the series a couple of times until she was satisfied that the class had mastered the material she had presented.

CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE

Students sat neatly in rows facing the teacher. They were all sitting quietly and still throughout the period. Their attention was mainly focussed on the teacher or their textbook/exercise book with little interaction between and among students.

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN CLASS.

Students carried out their assigned tasks quietly and promptly. There was no question asked, the teacher discouraged any kind of interaction that interfered with the tasks. Ss understood classroom routine and seemed to enjoy chanting, reading or responding to teacher's elicitation as a class.

TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE.

Teacher showed that she was in full control of the classroom proceedings without being overpowering. She maintained a clear, calm and well-paced voice that kept the attention of the students.

Teacher's comment on her own teaching. She was quite aware of her style and method of teaching that was rather teacher-centred. She realised that direct teaching such as the one practised in this ethnic school would not work in a day school for students who would find it too boring and too restrictive. However the atmosphere of the school and the pressure coming from parents who were brought up in the traditional method with the expectation that their children would learn something concrete and produce something visible made it impossible to change the focus to students' interest and needs. This was a great contrast to day school teaching when a great deal of time was spent on activities which are designed to motivate and keep the students' interested in learning as well as to enhance cognitive development. She also explained that the school adopts the traditional script for writing.

STUDENT-STUDENT INTERACTIONS

As students were sitting face to face with each other, there were plenty of opportunities for them to engage in On-task talk a well as off-task talk. As the task itself did not stimulate exchange other than clarifying what the teacher's instructions were, students were inclined to use their time on off-task talk, and the process of completing the task was therefore very slow. Those who completed their task earlier were not given extension activities, and they waited around for the other group members to finish before they started a reading-aloud exercise. Most of the students had no difficulty in reading out aloud the text as they had some repetitive practice of each line in the previous period. However, there were a few who showed that they needed help either from the teacher or a classmate to decipher the meaning of some characters and sentences in the text.

APPENDIX 3

Example of the curriculum planning process at SCHOOL A with particular reference to Integrated Studies.

Unlike the subject of language arts, integrated studies is content-based rather than language-based. It means that the teacher is more concerned with students' comprehension of the concepts rather than learning the language itself although the teacher will be using language as well as other means to convey meaning. In the case of Chinese, any explanation of abstract concepts requires the use of more complex vocabulary, as well as grammatical structures that are beyond the language proficiency level of the students. However as the common theme is being taught in both languages, students can first acquire the concepts in the mainstream language and do not have to rely solely on their knowledge and proficiency in Chinese. Thus the Chinese teacher can simplify the content, introduce minimal vocabulary so as not to burden them with remembering language items that are irrelevant to their cognitive development.

Integrated studies is a subject that allows teachers of the Bilingual Program to put their heads together and be creative in linking mathematical concepts, language, science, art technology and others to the host subject. Take the example of the theme in Term 2- Natural and Processed materials, which is taken from Science, which is the host subject of the term. One unit of work that evolves out of the theme is Kitchen chemistry. One very practical hands on activity to demonstrate it is the making of pikelets which involve the mixing of natural and processed materials to create something edible. In this activity, students get to learn about measurement of processed and natural ingredients, temperature of the heat for cooking, text type of a recipe-procedural writing which emphasises the use of first person imperative etc. This is the kind of activity that the bilingual students can do in their Chinese class, as it helps to illustrate concepts with the least demand on students' knowledge of the target language while in the English classes the students can do other experiments to reinforce the concepts without having to repeat the same activity again.

The Chinese teacher cited the following example to illustrate the point that it was extremely difficult to explain abstract concepts to children who are not adequate in the language. When she asked them to illustrate with examples of things made out of trees (after being cut and processed), some children could not quite comprehend the relationship between the object such as paper, table and chairs with trees. She suggested that it would save a lot of her class time if this concept could be first cleared in their English classes.

APPENDIX 4 – BACKGROUND TO THE VSL

Based on interview with Frank Merlino, School Principal 15.9.98)

The VSL (formerly the Saturday School of Modern Languages) provides programs in 40 languages to over 13000 primary and secondary students (Years 1-12) who (at least in theory) do not have access to such provision in Government, Catholic and Independent schools. It also provides LOTE courses to a number of adult students and distance education courses in 7 languages to approximately 1000 secondary students in Government, Catholic and Independent schools.

History

The VSL, formerly the Saturday School of Modern Languages (SSML) was set up in 1935 at MacRobertson Girls' High School. Initially only Japanese was offered but Italian was later added. Enrolments dwindled during the war years but classes continued, despite recommendations that they be closed down. In 1942 classes were shifted to University High School when the American army took over MacRobertson Girls' High School as its headquarters.

The number of languages offered by the school continued to grow, as follows:

- In the 1940s Dutch, Russian and Chinese were introduced;
- In the 1960s Indonesian, Hebrew*, Spanish and Portuguese* were added to the list;
- In the 1970s programs in Estonian, Macedonian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian**, Hungarian, French, German, Maltese, Turkish, Czech, Arabic, Slovenian, Slovak and Vietnamese were established;
- In the 1980s language classes in Croatian, Albanian, Serbian, Portuguese, Pushtu, Khmer, Hindi were set up.

* *These languages have now been discontinued*

** *Since 1981, this language is taught separately as Serbian and Croatian*

Fees for students were introduced in 1964 and in 1965 the first non-teaching administrator was appointed.

Italian was the language with the largest number of enrolments until the mid-seventies when increasing numbers of mainstream schools began to offer Italian, until then the largest language group at the SSML. The concurrent drop in SSML Italian enrolments suggests that the school had acted as a catalyst in broadening the mainstream LOTE curriculum.

By 1981 there were 6,200 learners enrolled at 12 large centres; 260 instructors were teaching 26 languages from Year 7 up. The Saturday School, as it was then known, was clearly supplying a need not met by mainstream schools.

The Education Department's move to decentralisation in 1982 initially seemed to threaten the SSML, but the need to retain its identity and structure in order to ensure efficient statewide provision of LOTE was subsequently recognised.

In 1983, the then Headmaster of the SSML made a submission to the Australian Senate Standing Committee – "Towards a National Language Policy" identifying problem areas for the 26 languages taught as follows:

- Only 16 languages had a Teachers' Association;
- For 14 languages there was a shortage of suitable teaching materials;
- 8 languages received no organised support from their ethnic communities;
- the fact that classes were not accorded Higher School Certificate (HSC) status lowered retention rates;
- there was a huge shortage of qualified LOTE teachers;

- the absence of tertiary provision in certain LOTE was a disincentive for learners and contributed to the teacher shortage;
- there was a need for in-service training for teachers, particularly in LOTE methodology.

By 1985 the school was providing 30 languages for 8000 learners; 400 instructors were working in 16 centres: Years. 7-10 : 2 hours, Yr. 11: 2.5 hours, Year. 12: 3 hours. Conditions were very restricted. Following representation by the SSML to the Victorian Government a Ministry Working Party was established to review the following aspects of the school and make recommendations:

- administrative and financial arrangements, facilities, accountability;
- current services, means for improvement and expansion (e.g. to provide for primary and technical learners);
- relations with other educational agencies;
- staffing provisions.

In late 1987 the Minister of Education announced that most of the Working Party's 29 recommendations to upgrade the SSML had been accepted. Some of the most significant were:

- a change of name to the Victorian School of Languages.
- a school status classification change to A level, with an elected School Council responsible for finance and curriculum policy and required to advise the Ministry of Education on a broad range of issues.
- a minimum of 3 contact hours' provision per week.
- the provision of in-service training for instructors.
- the likely expansion of the service to country areas and to primary levels of schooling.

Current policy and funding situation

The LOTE ESL and Multicultural Services Section has policy responsibility for the school. Assessment and reporting requirements are analogous to those in the mainstream state education system.

The Department of Education recurrently funds the VSL with annual requests made by the administration for specific developments. Annual requests are made by the administration for specific developments. While lack of funds is the biggest problem for the VSL the actual running of classes is highly cost-efficient however. New Centres can be quickly set up to supplement any gaps in mainstream provision.

The minimum class size for VSL classes is 15 and the maximum 26, although exceptions are made to this ruling in special cases. Students pay $40.00 per annum for participation.

Language teachers are not necessarily trained or qualified, but some quality control measures are applied by appointing them on a trial basis for a 4-week period. Professional development occurs twice a year and new teachers sometimes access LOTE methodology courses run by tertiary institutions.

Parents are involved at the level of local School Council, appointed by annual election, with a representation of five parents per council. Some centres have a Centre Advisory Committee and teachers and parents meet as necessary. There are also language specific parent groups at centres, which organise prizes, books, VCE dinner etc.

For many years Italian had the highest enrolments of all languages offered for Saturday study but numbers fell in the mid-seventies coinciding with an increase in the number of Italian programs offered within the mainstream school system.

APPENDIX 5 – AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION ON THE PROGRAM C CURRICULUM

The following documents and samples of work have been supplied by the teacher.

Italian Course Outline.

This course outline provides VSL teachers with a number of units of work for students and primary and secondary school including the VCE. A copy of the course outline for students in Years 1-6 was supplied.

The topics covered are: Myself, Body, Weather, Classroom Animals, House, Nursery Rhymes, Clothing, Family, Cultural Events, Italian History, Italian Foods, Leisure Activities, Holiday Time In Italy and Christmas.

The focus of each topic is outlined and a grid presents the various discourse forms, classroom activities, linguistic elements, assessment activities and possible resources which can be developed for that particular topic.

Teachers are not required to strictly follow this course outline, rather it is provided as support and guide in planning.

Term Planner

A term planner for Terms 1 and 2 is provided by the VSL. Teachers are required to complete this document as part of their overall term planning. For each topic which will be developed during the term, usually two to three topics, teachers list the main activities they will develop in the classroom. They will also identify assessment activities and the text-types and linguistic elements they will present. Main resources, both oral and written are also identified. The teacher then develops a set of weekly notes that outline the activities planned for each lesson.

CSF Student Record Sheet

For each assessment task undertaken by students throughout the year, the teacher records a comment and a grade for each of the Strands.

Student Report Card

Students receive a report each semester, that is, in June and December.

Worksheets

1 The first example provided is a listening activity based on a song where students fill the gaps.

2 The second example is a dialogue which students were asked to read, some dictation was based on this text and students were also asked to use the dialogue as basis for creating their own role-play.

3 For this exercise students were asked to complete the description by replacing the picture with the appropriate words.

4. In this exercise students had to match each description to a picture. Students could also use the descriptions presented in this worksheet to assist them in other activities.

5. Students used known vocabulary to complete the various descriptions in a piece of guided writing.

6. Listed below are some of the tasks students are undertaking as part of the work on Clothing. Students are able to choose which task/s they would like to complete and work at their own level/pace.

- Design an outfit for a skiing trip or another special occasion. Draw it and label it in detail (using adjectives) in Italian.
- Describe in Italian an outfit that you wore to a party recently .
- Design an outfit, label it in detail and then imagine that you are the MC at a fashion parade and describe it in Italian. A paragraph of 10 lines.
- Write a dialogue. Discuss/argue with your parents about what you should wear to your friend's birthday party.

APPENDIX 6

Background to the Comitato Assistenza Italiani (CoAsIt)

(based on interview with Umberto Martinengo, Program Coordinator)

CoAsIt has a long tradition of teaching Italian to primary level students commencing in 1968. The initial program was directed to students of Italian background via Saturday school classes. The rationale behind the program was to retain the family's language and culture and facilitate inter-generational communication.

This program generated community interest in the introduction of Italian during school hours. Following recommendations from the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affair, the Ethnic Schools Program was established in 1981 and provided open access ethnic schools and "insertion" classes in regular day schools. The program was administered through the Commonwealth Schools Commission and provided a per capita grant of up to $ 30.

The development of community-based language programs held during school hours (insertion classes) helped to foster a multicultural society since over 80% of students learning Italian were of non-Italian descent.

The aims of insertion programs are twofold and can be identified as (i) assisting students from non-English speaking background to maintain their language and culture and (ii) providing opportunities for students of other cultural background to learn a community language spoken in Australia.

The number of insertion programs has been fixed since 1994 and it totals thirty-five schools. These schools decided to continue offering LOTE through the insertion program provided through CoAsIt rather than doing so independently or through the Department of Education (DoE). Approximately 12,000 students are enrolled in the thirty-five schools and should a school decide to discontinue their insertion program a new school will not replace it. The thirty-five schools, all state primary, are located both in metropolitan and country regions.

Usually the contact time is two hours per week although in 1998 contact time had increased to 2.5 hours. Contact time is dependant on the funding provided by the Italian Government and the $ 75 per capita provided by the State Government which schools participating in insertion classes forward to CoAsIt. This State Government funding is used to provide one-hour tuition which is then increased with funding allocated from the Italian Government.

Usually teachers are identified directly by the schools or through the CoAsIt Newsletter. The principals interview possible candidates and inform CoAsIt of their decision. Assessment is carried out by the DoE to identify qualifications and correct subdivisions, this information is utilised by CoAsIt to determine teacher salary. Teachers are employed on a contractual basis, either full time or part time. Full time teachers are entitled to two hours Administrative Planning Time (APT) as well as holiday pay, sick leave and superannuation. Contracts are renewed annually. Finding suitable teachers has always been difficult and there seems to be a shortage of teachers of Italian particularly at the moment.

Responsibilities are in a sense divided, CoAsIt has responsibility for the administrative aspect while the school is responsible for the content and integration into the school curriculum. There are very limited opportunities for CoAsIt to have input into the running of the program, this is left very much to the school.

Many short professional development courses and regular workshops are offered to teachers employed through CoAsIt but attendance is left entirely up to the teacher. CoAsIt also has offers support through their Language and Multimedia Resource Centre. The library at the Centre has up-to-date resources to cater for primary and secondary students and employs trained and experienced bilingual staff.

NOONGAR AND YINDJIBARNDI IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Noongar and Yindibarndji programs both occur within mainstream schools. This is also the case with the Khmer program. However, these programs and the kind of language maintenance that they represent are radically different from the Chinese and Italian instances in the preceding section.

The kinds of data and information collected here vary partly because of the radically different nature of the contexts of the programs, partly also because the Context Adaptive Model adopted as the methodological orientation of the study is sensitive to the priorities of the stakeholders as well as the setting in which the programs occur.

Visits were made to Roebourne Primary School and Wickham District High School where Yindjibarndi is taught. Ngarlama is the language of Roebourne but speakers of Yindjibarndi and Banyjima also live in the town. The language program started at the primary school in 1992 is in Yindjibarndi. In 1990 a program in both Yindjibarndi and Ngarlama was trialed but the latter was discontinued. Yindjibarndi is taught in the preschool, pre-primary and primary school. It is also taught at Wickham District High School.

Principals of both schools have been spoken to and interviews conducted with several teachers and AIEW (Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers) as well as some parents. The material from these recorded interviews has now been processed and the findings are summarised below.

Several language classes were observed and student surveys of the programs conducted.

A visit was made to Wangka Maya, the language centre in Port Hedland and also to the Minurmaghali Mia, a campus of Pundulmurra College in Roebourne where Certificates in Language Work are offered. A visit was made to Ngurra Wangkanagayi (an Aboriginal-run cultural awareness centre) in Roebourne. It became clear that the language course at the school exists in a context in which linguistic and cultural revitalisation and promotion are on the community agenda.

It was evident that there is a need for a culturally sensitive approach. There is evidence of a high degree of racial tension and segregation in the area. Itinerant workers whom the researcher met informally where the researcher was staying made their hostility to Aboriginal language work quite clear and reiterated (as the researcher had anticipated) a need for caution in opening the debate about choice of language programs too widely.

It was also evident that having a local language as the language taught in this school is widely supported within the school and community.

A The Yindjibarndi program at Roebourne Primary School

Principal and teachers

The principal and deputy-principal who are also the languages other than English coordinator and four class teachers were interviewed; teachers from the Yindjibarndi program and teachers in the pre-primary and pre-school. In this section the researcher documented the main points emerging from all these interviews. It begins with some comments that emerged in the course of the interviews which helped to contextualise the language program.

One of the non-Aboriginal teachers grew up locally and remembers when the social problems in Roebourne were much worse than they are now cautioning, *'everyone wants a quick fix and I don't think I'll see it in my life 200 years of degradation can't be fixed in ten years of good policy.'*

As a local he is very attuned to the politics of the area and the huge class divisions in Karratha. He described how he had coached a cricket team of eleven-year-olds from one part of the town and not one had *'ever met an Aboriginal person in their life.'*

His awareness of both the positive changes in Roebourne in his lifetime and the continuing antipathy towards Aboriginal people in the area led him to conclude that the solution was, *'Pride. It's the only thing that's going to save Roebourne.'* It is clear that many of the staff see that encouraging positive attitudes is one of their major tasks.

Other staff members who grew up in Roebourne are the language teachers themselves. A- grew up there and attended school in Roebourne but was not allowed to speak Yindjibarndi. She spoke animatedly about what fun it was to learn to read her own words in language and how excited she was by it. At first she had *'giggled very much'* because it was so alien to write Yindjibarndi, but it had been exciting for her.

Benefits of the program.

Most teachers were very positive 'wonderful, really good.' Several teachers regarded language maintenance as one of the benefits of the program. The principal stated that, *'If it's taught properly it's going to survive and it is taught properly and is still used widely in the community.'*

For some teachers, their understanding of the children was also a goal. *'It allows me to understand* **them** *a lot more, but also I think its important for them to keep their language alive and going, if it wasn't for this I don't think they'd speak it as much as they do. A lot of the kids aren't strong at all in speaking it.'*

One teacher was less committed to Yindjibarndi in particular but referred to the *'advantages in learning two languages, whatever that other language may be.'*

One of the language teachers emphasised that the benefits were not simply for Aboriginal children, but for mutual understanding.

> *'To me it's breaking the barrier and bringing the kids together, the European kids as well, to respect each other. To be whole, to learn together. That's what I thought before the white kids were there. I thought you can't talk in that language, you've got to talk white man's language, but now we are teaching the children our language not just for me and M-, for the Aboriginal kids, it's for this community, even the grown-ups want to be taught this language.'*

Language maintenance

The overall aim seemed to be language maintenance and it was clear that the principal and deputy believe the school plays an important role in this.

In the words of the principal, 'Keeping the culture alive and it could be in danger of diminishing because when you lose the language you lose a lot of things. So, it is a cultural thing really, that's why we chose to do that and not some other, foreign language. Even though there still are a lot of people in the community who do speak Yindjibarndi, it's not as enforced because of the way lifestyles have changed and you can see that if the lifestyle change continues along the lines they have been it would die out. So it's just a matter of reinforcing it and keeping it alive basically.'

The deputy principal too evidently sees the school program as a major factor in language maintenance, saying,

> *'the major purpose really is to keep the language*

> *alive. Without that program money for the school I think the Yindjibarndi language is definitely going to fade away and it's a way of keeping the language alive and it also helps the kids to relate to some of the things that are happening within the school as well. Some children are very good speakers and others not so much. If its not something that's seen as important within the community the eventually it will die out but by making it one of our learning areas within the school, it's viewed as important by the school and by the community and it's hopefully going to get stronger and grow and continue. Whereas, left to it's own devices, it will become fragmented and all right, some families will continue but over a period of time I imagine it will die out.'*

Attitudes

Closely related to the perceived benefits of the program, was the issue of attitude. For many involved in the program, the emphasis is not so much upon language skills per se, but on changing attitudes towards the language so that language learning occurs within a more positive context.

One teacher said she saw the purpose of the program as being,

> *'To allow the children to have pride in themselves and their culture and their language and to hopefully make it go on so it doesn't die out and it would be a shame for it to die out because the children aren't speaking it they aren't learning it. It's a big part of their culture, their language. I think that's the main idea, to give them a bit of identity, a bit of pride. And to increase their self-esteem, make them feel better about themselves. I think it helps and it's good for the community too when they come to school and hear the language spoken.'*

One teacher stated that he and the children go out on excursions with the language teachers to get bush food and so on, *'things they do every week but they need to see that I think it's important as well.'*

The same teacher described how the language teacher tells them some Aboriginal history and he tells some Greek mythology and then *'we talk about why the stars are* **actually** *there but we never tell them "This is how it is". All avenues for understanding are there.'*

Language and the classroom

The deputy principal stressed the benefits of the language program for the teachers.

> *'When teachers sit in on the language lessons they often pick up and learn things about the Yindjibarndi culture that are appropriate to their classroom teaching. So a theme that's run in their classroom is often picked up on in the Yindjibarndi lessons as well so they can work in well together.'*

Many staff tie language classes in with themes they are doing in class. One explained how he gets together with the language teachers although for some themes its not possible to *'invent Aboriginal words, there's no Aboriginal word for bike.'* His class is currently studying space, so to talk about names of stars and constellations in Yindjibarndi they have to 'stretch', for example using Yindjibarndi words to talk about the atmospheres on outer planets, describing Venus as 'stormy'.

One teacher stated how the Aboriginal teachers would often take over the health lesson because it's Aboriginal health and its something *'I don't know a lot about, bush tucker and bush medicine'.*

However, unlike the other teachers spoken to, one said he said he did not have much to do with the program. *'Occasionally we tie things in together but we don't complement each other.'*

Language learning

There is a great deal of emphasis on changing attitudes so the researcher asked the LOTE coordinator if there was any evidence that the children's linguistic skills were improving. *'The kids, they talk in Aboriginal English and that's fine* *but, I don't know, I'd be making huge assumptions if I were to say it's made major inroads so far as their linguistic skills are concerned.'*

Some of the teachers spoke about their efforts to learn the language. One wished she could pick up the language quicker and commented that in class there is not much explanation in English *'so it's hard for us to follow. In lower classes the teachers use primary Yindjibarndi a lot more for classroom management.*

She then talked about the difficulty of often not knowing what is going on in the Yindjibarndi classes and says that the teachers in lower classes benefit more since there is more explanation. She usually tries to sit near one of those children to translate for her during language classes.

She has a very positive attitude toward the language herself.

> *'I'm trying to learn the language but the kids are funny when you start talking it. As you've probably noticed they all start to have a giggle and laugh and think it's pretty funny. I noticed when I had the year fours last year I would be in language class trying my best to learn the language and the kids would start to laugh and then one of them would pipe up and say, "She's trying her hardest!" Basically saying what I would say like, "Leave then alone they're doing their best!"'*

One teacher's response to a question about perceived weaknesses said, *'Although they're learning individual words which I think they could easily use in conjunction with English sentences, substituting Yindjibarndi words for English words, it doesn't seem they're learning to speak whole sentences or put what they think in their language.'*

He went on to say they are not apparently taught *'any general rules to help them construct a sentence'* but added, *'that may be where the kids are at.'* Although this teacher had more experience with learning foreign languages previously than most of the other teachers he said he was not having much success learning Yindjibarndi *'but picks up the occasional word.'*

Assessment

It is clear that there is not much explanation of grammatical structure, nor is there much translation into, or explanation, in English and this was a problem for some of the teachers. In class, the teachers speak in Yindjibarndi mostly and both children and teachers have to try to follow what is happening. Part of the difficulty of accommodating the language into a school system arises because Yindjibarndi, like all Aboriginal language, is an oral language that has only recently been written down.

As one teacher commented, *'It's hard to assess because 'there's no hard copy'* and said that, for an oral language, there is too much emphasis on literacy in assessment and that also the children *'understand more than they speak so that's also difficult'.*

The oral nature of the language is acknowledged by the LOTE coordinator who said that for assessment they used student outcome statements from listening strand of the LOTE program and that, *'most of the kids are at level one or two and some of the better speakers may be at level three, student outcome statement levels.'*

He spoke about the progress being made in the program, the fact that *'now the older kids, 6 and 7s are actually writing language, they use dictionaries and are actually doing writing.... There is that is noticeable progress.'*

When asked what the children think of the program the principal said that they had used an attitudinal survey that was generally positive. *'We never have any discipline problems in our classes, so they must be enjoying them.'*

Students' progress is reported to parents by sending home portfolios that contain samples of the children's work and also student surveys.

Funding

In response to questions about funding for LOTE, which is compulsory in WA, the principal stated: *'Per capita the school gets a small grant but not a great deal of money, I think we got $750. So the actual funding you get for LOTE is not great.'*

He said that there had been no problems with funding and the situation had improved since it is *'officially recognised through policy LOTE now but I guess we've used AIEW time to fund the actual LOTE programs.'*

Community support

The local community, through the ASSPA committee supports the program. Both language teachers, A- who has been with the program since it started and M- who joined later were interviewed. A- stated that they initially trialed both a Ngarlama and Yindjibarndi program *'but it went down because the teacher found it hard to teach his own language and they couldn't find another teacher.'* At that stage she took over teaching Yindjibarndi. She attributed the continuation of the program to community support.

When asked if there had been any problems getting old people to *'come all the way here and climb up the stairs.'* She added that there were a few old people who are committed and go on excursions with the children.

She went on to say that both she and M- seek advice from the old people. '

> *Me and M- are always going out for information, we need to go for information, its a learning thing for us as well. Even though the kids are there and we are the teacher, we're learning this and that from the old people. That's why we want the old people to come out with us.'*

It was clear that, for them, the success of the program depended upon community involvement and support.

Because of the emphasis on changing community attitudes, the researcher asked the principal if there was any evidence in a change in community attitude since the language program started.

> *'The only thing that we can gauge is that when there are assemblies or concerts the local people, the adults who come, physically show excitement when the kids speak the language, they seem to get a big thrill out of that. When the kids present something in YB all the adults that are here stop and listen. You can see the smiles. It's a sort of happy reflection back.'*

The principal continued to explain that the ASSPA committee wanted a special award, the AIEW/ASSPA language award. The language teachers chose the award winners and they may be rewarded for attitude, not just performance.

> *'A few non-Aboriginal kids have won these awards because they really got into it. That's another positive sign so it's not just Aboriginal kids that are learning it and learning it well but non-Aboriginal kids that are picking it up.'*

One of the teachers the researcher spoke to talked about another teacher (whom the researcher did not have the opportunity to interview) who did a whole assembly in Yindjibarndi.

> *'It was just fantastic and the parents were just so happy to hear it and Di just got up and she must have practised and practised and practised because she just spoke in Yindjibarndi language. It was flawless, it was fantastic and it was very good for the community to see the teachers trying as well, to see that they are really valuing what the kids do and their language.'*

The influence of English

When the researcher asked one of the language teachers the reason for the program she said,

> *'Well, my feeling, is that, the majority of the kids are Aboriginal, that's one of the reasons so the community decided they wanted their kids to learn the language in the school. It helps kids to know who they are. Be proud of who they are. Spiritual things too, I always come back to that because I think it's a spiritual thing as well. There's something about having your own language to learn, part of who God made you be.' She spoke about the influence of television and radio in the home; ' Because of white, western influences it's a bit of a struggle.'*

Several people mentioned the influence of television. The principal described it as *'one of their babysitters if you like'* and attributed the decline in the use of ancestral languages to the influence of English-language television and videos.

The researcher asked if the children speak language at home. M- said that some of them do but there are many other influences and some of them might watch too much television and some of them listen to pop music.

Both A- and M- recalled speaking Yindjibarndi at home when they were children and said that now it was spoken less and that old people are *'always mixing it up. what'd you call it, broken-down language, pidgin.'*

Problems

The researcher enquired of all the interviewees about weaknesses in the program. There was almost unanimous agreement that one of the weaknesses was their dependence upon two people.

> *'If we lost the two people doing it we may have trouble finding a replacement to come in where these people are up to. That's at the back of our minds, that these two might not be around' and also ' If either of those two ladies were to go elsewhere, where would that leave the program?*
>
> *We would be without speakers altogether so the actual issue of speakers is a huge one. A major issue is having competent speakers and confident speakers to run the program. I guess there's repetition because of the scope of what they can teach within that area. It's very much an oral program. Some of the 6/7s are now starting to do some writing but basically it is an oral program where the kids are speaking and listening.'*

Ironically, the success and longevity of the program is also attributed to the particular two people being

> *'readily available and no likelihood of them leaving and they're well supported by the community. The funding that comes is helpful for certain aspects of it but if we didn't have the two people funds wouldn't make any difference.'*

The other perceived problems mentioned were that it needs support of class teacher and the ideas must be used in class too. *'The language classes are not enough on their own unless the language is also used to relate to other classroom activities'.*

One teacher also commented on the extent to which other activities, such as sports events, interrupted the language classes.

Student attitudes

The researcher had access to the student surveys mentioned above. As the researcher had been told, these were generally positive although there are difficulties with the survey design. This will be discussed in more detail at a later stage. The researcher has not surveyed students yet but has conducted a pilot interview with one.

R, year 6, is the daughter of M-, one of the language teachers. She told the researcher that they have language classes, *'so we don't lose the language'.* When asked if she spoke Yindjibarndi at home she said she did sometimes.

The researcher asked if she learned different things in class, things she didn't learn at home.

'Change the words and spelling them'.

'When you say change the words, what do you mean?'

'When you say wanyja and wanyjayi it's different spelling like that.'

'Wanyja and wanjayi?'

'Yeah wanyja is one, and wanyjayi is two, or one, still the one.'

[yi is in fact the object marker, wanyja is dog]

She stated that going on excursions was what she liked best about classes.

The last excursion she went on was to Millstream last year *'to look at all the bush food with my mum and my teacher and all the kids we have to walk around the two hour trail looking at all different plants.'*

The researcher asked whether she had ever thought she would like to learn another language such as Indonesian or French but she said that she only wanted to learn Yindjibarndi.

She told the researcher that the most difficult part of the lessons was, *'trying to sound out and read the words.'*

The researcher asked her whether she thought her children would speak Yindjibarndi. *'Maybe, I don't know. Yeah, I'll make sure they learn it.'*

Parent attitudes.

The researcher had the opportunity to speak to some of the non-Aboriginal women who work in the school canteen and have children at the school.

One mother said that her younger son, in grade 2, is *'Right into it. Hey mum, what's a warlu and what's a this and what's a that and I can't even remember it all you know. He's trying to teach me. He knows about ten animals.'*

This led onto a discussion about how the children pick up Aboriginal English, using 'been' as a past-tense marker, which the parents are not very happy about. However, when the researcher asked if they were happy that their children are learning Yindjibarndi the immediate response was, *'Yeah, why not? It helps them get on better with the kids.'*

Another parent added, *'It's either that or French or Italian or something, where are you going to use that here?'*

One mother complained that the white children do not get awards but another mother who said that her child had, in fact, received one contradicted this.

B The Yindjibarndi program at Wickham District High School

Wickham DHS is where most children from Roebourne go. the researcher spoke with the LOTE coordinator and one of the language teachers. the researcher was told that a District High School goes from K to 10, but this one is *'a bit different'* since the primary and secondary sections are quite separate whereas in most the primary and secondary are *'a lot more meshed.'*

The primary school is predominantly the children of mining company personnel, about 45 Aboriginal children in primary out of around 280. Thus Aboriginal children are a minority in the primary section but the main feeder primary for the secondary section is Roebourne. Most of the children in the primary section, the Wickham children, travel by bus to Karratha High School or to the Catholic High School there.

Consequently there are few non-Aboriginal children in the high school section at Wickham. Out of 50 students, only 4 are non-Aboriginal. Most of the Aboriginal children are from Roebourne but some are from Wickham that is described as a *'divided sort of town'.* Most

Aboriginal students live in the State housing area, as opposed to private or mining company housing.

The primary school has a Language Other Than English program in French since the music teacher *'can teach French too'.*

In 1997 the program started since by the year 2000 all kids up to year 10 had to be doing LOTE. The students in year 8 were offered the choice of French or Yindjibarndi. Out of 25, 5 chose French but because of the high level of absenteeism both years 8 and 9 this year are offered only Yindjibarndi.

The initial decision to offer Yindjibarndi arose because there had always been an element of language study as part of the Aboriginal Studies program.

The languages other than English coordinator told the researcher that when they started to think about an Aboriginal LOTE the only teacher available was A-[the teacher from Roebourne] and she's a Yindjibarndi speaker and an experienced LOTE teacher.' She continued that she was *'aware there has been discussion in the community'* and said that people need to be thinking about Ngarlama, the language of the area or Banyjima, *'because there are a significant number of Banyjima speakers'* but said that it was *'impossible to find anyone who has time or inclination to teach these languages.'* She implied that if the community wanted other languages they would be open to teaching them but the problem was finding teachers.

She said that people are conscious of the other languages describing how last term they did an excursion to the Burrup peninsular and because it's Ngarlama country the teacher was very careful to bring her husband to that since *'he's the one that has to speak about that area. When they do names of local places they say, "these are Ngarlama names"'.*

The school receives an annual amount of $750 for resources. A- is employed as an AIEW for one day per week and the other teacher is employed casually as an itinerant worker. This is a scheme that enables the teacher to be paid by the school whereas *'previously it went through central office and took up to eight weeks and understandably people were reluctant to work under those conditions'.*

The researcher was told the success of the program depended on having someone committed on the staff and people to teach too. She said that in the previous year, which was the first year of the program there was only one teacher and she had many family commitments and much sickness in the family. Now there is less strain with another teacher and *'It's great because it's more a team. It's important it doesn't hinge on one person'.*

She described the biggest problem as finding people to teach. Another is that some Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children have been resistant but that they overcame it

By telling them *'It's the eighth learning area, it's like maths, we have to do it.' She convinced a disruptive child that it was good for him to learn any other language.*

'I think it was a racist thing. He said "I don't wanna learn their language" and "My mum said I don't have to learn THEIR language"'.

The researcher asked her what she was hoping to achieve with the program. *'With the Aboriginal kids it's to affirm we, the school, we value their language, their culture.'* She went on to describe how at the start of the Aboriginal studies program many children almost denied their Aboriginality. *'A lot of the teenage kids only use Yindjibarndi for swearwords, use it in that sort of context.'* She thought that *'puts a negative connotation on it.'*

She described how the AIEW went home and taped his grandfather telling a traditional story and she watched a child, *'barely literate in English whose face lit up listening to the story.'* She also thought it was important for non-Aboriginal children to know there is more than one Aboriginal language, to combat the ignorance about Aboriginal cultural matters. She added that they now have speakers in school every week and we *'don't have Aboriginal people in staffroom* **often**, *so that's good.'*

They have not yet addressed the issue of formal evaluation but said an MA student had done a survey of student's attitudes towards the program that was 'generally favourable'.

All students, in years 8 and 9 do classes together because of the small numbers and low attendance since the classes are on Thursday, which is payday.

Conclusion

One of the most significant points is best summarised by one of the teachers in response to a query about how he would react if it were decided that Indonesian should be taught as the LOTE. *'Fair enough'*, but he went on to say he would still do language and culture work as part of the social science curriculum with the AIEWs since he regards this work as a vital part of the children's education.

C The Noongar Program at Langford Primary School

The research site is a small suburban primary school in the southeastern suburbs of the Perth metropolitan area, less than 15 kilometres from the city centre. Approximately 45% of the children who attend the school are Aboriginal children while another 20% of the children are non-Anglo. The school has an active P and C Association and an active ASSPA Committee.

LOTE

Under Western Australian government policy all primary school children are to have access to a second language by the year 2000. The Aboriginal language Noongar was chosen to be the language other than English offered by Langford Primary School and the program is now in its third year of operation. The program has been progressively introduced, beginning with the pre-primary and is now also established at Year 1/2 and Year 3/4 levels. It is anticipated that it will be offered throughout the full school, to year 7 level, by the year 2001.

Choice of Language

The Noongar language appears to have been chosen as the school's language program in the light of the large number of Aboriginal children in the school and as the result of community and staff support at the time of introduction and subsequently .

Noongar, a language with several regional forms, is the indigenous language of the southwest of Western Australia including the Perth area. It is probably the case that there are no members of the Aboriginal community of Langford who speak Noongar as a first language. The Principal described most of the parents of the Aboriginal children in the school as 'well-educated' (perhaps meaning 'school educated') and as seeming to constitute one of the generations with whom language transmission as a first language was interrupted to a large degree, though many will have had some contact with the language.

The Principal of the school believes that the teaching of an Aboriginal language is quite reasonable given the composition of the school, though he believes that it may be that it does not serve the non-Aboriginal component of the school population as well as it serves the Aboriginal component. It would be possible to consider introducing a more international LOTE such as Indonesian either instead of or as well as Noongar, but this is not necessary because of the level of support accorded to Noongar within the school community.

He believes that learning Noongar just as well as any other LOTE can develop the skills of language learning, so that many of the same benefits will accrue to the students, irrespective of which language they are learning. A very significant factor in the choice of language should be and is the support of the school community.

Language and Culture

The main advantage of the Noongar program is that language is 'an integral part of the Aboriginal push to rediscover their culture'. There is relatively little of the traditional culture still active in Langford but the 'language provides the first rallying point for the people's culture'.

The school Principal indicates that he would like to be altruistic and say that learning the language gives greater pride to the children in their heritage but he believes that 'young kids don't see the importance'. Just as with his own children, they are too hedonistic and self interested, but he agreed that later in life they may well come to value the exposure they have had to Noongar language and culture which they have had at this point in their lives.

Special Nature of Aboriginal Language Program

Oral

The Education Department of Western Australia released its Curriculum Framework during 1998, including languages other than English, but the framework does not fit Noongar so well because it is an oral rather than written language in the judgement of WB, acting Principal and a teacher involved in the Noongar classes.

The Principal believes that the fact that the language is traditionally only oral also creates some difficulty in assessment of how the program is going. There is some use of written material.

Cultural approach

The AIEW who provides the teaching in the Noongar program (CH) makes it clear in discussing planning for lessons that she adopts a Noongar approach which is more pragmatic and responsive, less fixed than that of non-Aboriginal education patterns. While lesson planning is carried out the direction of classes may change in response to the reactions of the students or the needs of the moment.

The Principal recognised something similar when he indicated that, in his experience in another Aboriginal school in the north of the state, timing needed to be flexible and adjustable in the language classes in response to the availability of community staff.

Language in the School Program

Noongar classes run in the school on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Classes are one hour long each, with another hour of preparation provided for.

EDWA staffs Aboriginal language programs differently from other languages. They cannot supply speakers as they do with other languages, but they provide extra staffing in the form of Aboriginal and Islander Education workers, which in turn makes integration of the language within the whole school program easier, because the classroom teacher stays in class and learns the language with the children. The classroom teacher and the AIEW do preparation together for the language lesson. The school staff are keen to maintain the staffing model currently used and in fact they requested that they attend classes etc. after initially organising the Noongar language classes so that the students went out of their regular class to them. The school believes that the LOTE program works because the staff regard it as a priority.

At the same time the program is resource intensive because the time involves not just one staff member but two to three all the time and next year, when there will be a total of five classes per week in Noongar in the school, this will add up to significant staff resources.

Staffing

In the Principal's view, the people implementing the language program are very dedicated, 'increasingly so'. It is seen as highly advantageous that the Aboriginal language teacher is constantly in the school rather than visiting from the community, because this leads to greater continuity and commitment to the program.

In the Principal's view the key issue in selection of staff in the program he had experience of in the north of the state was reliability of participation. Generally there were a number of people available with the relevant language skills, but as visitors from the community they were not regularly available to fit in with the school program. In Perth the key issue in the selection of staff is to find a person with sufficient knowledge of the language.

The two present language specialists of the Noongar program in the school and the four-year old preschool are very valuable and with their involvement the program has a good future. It is, however very dependent on their continuing involvement. If anything should change and either of these staff move on in the future, there is none in the background who would be clearly able to replace them in the role of providing language input.

The two AIEWs are largely self taught in terms of Noongar language skills, according to one of them.

Language Achievement and Assessment

The Principal believes that lack of experience in language teaching is perhaps the biggest issue in the assessment of how the program is going. Judgements of success have been made but language development has not been able to be measured.

The Department of Education's LOTE Outcome Statements will be used to provide a guide on how to assess the children's language and this will allow the program to progress to the next stage of its evolution. It is suggested that the children in the upper years of the program are at Outcomes levels 2 or 3 in Listening and Speaking but this has not yet been verified.

A backup language speaker-still acquiring the language herself-has indicated some disappointment, especially with the Year 4 children, that they don't speak more than one or two words. They tend to respond but not to initiate exchanges in Noongar.

As noted above, the fact that the language is oral only, without a literacy tradition, creates another difficulty for the assessment of language skill in the school setting.

Interestingly enough, one of the better speakers in the Noongar program is a boy of Chinese origin.

Feedback

The LOTE program provides the regular types of feedback to parents in the same way as other subjects, via reports etc., but offers no additional feedback to parents specific to the language program.

Relationship with Community

While the school and the school community are mutually supportive, there is no significant interaction between the two in relation to the language program. It seems that no parents are undertaking to acquire the language themselves. The AIEWs are members of the Aboriginal community but in the Principal's perception it is the school which seems to be driving the program, albeit with community support. He hopes to turn this around over the next year or so, and see the community, through ASSPA taking a stronger role in the program. In particular he sees a need for the parent body and the school community generally to take more initiative in the further development of the Noongar program. Where they take initiative their support is likely to be stronger and more beneficial.

Attitudes towards Noongar

In discussion with the AIEW she indicated that there is no racism evident in the school in relation to the Noongar language program. Non-Aboriginal children especially Asians welcome it and do well in it.

Professional Development

Aboriginal Staff
Regular professional development is provided by EDWA for the Aboriginal staff of the language program, usually taking AIEWs to the far north or Kimberley. Recently they travelled to Broome and Dampier for a week at a time, working with LOTE staff from schools in those regions. This is better and cheaper than bringing the students from the north to Perth.

Non-Aboriginal Staff
On the other hand regular professional development is not provided for non-Aboriginal staff involved in the program. Such professional development could be 'hugely useful' both for LOTE teaching and cultural sensitivity aspects.

Relationship with the Education Department of Western Australia

The language other than English officer in Geraldton is responsible for Langford. She visits the program for a day or so a couple of times per year.

Classroom observations

The following can be taken as an example of a Noongar lesson in the pre-school class.

The session began with greetings. This included some mixed language: "Not when I'm *wagening*" ('talking')

The class proper began with "Heads and shoulders, knees and toes" in Noongar.

Classroom management was largely in English. "He thinks he's a canary." "Oh, you're X's sister."

Big-book reading followed this. The teacher read and the children repeated after her. The non-Aboriginal teachers joined in.

Then followed a game involving putting things on a picture and telling a story about it.

Finally the class practised a song for a forthcoming assembly.

Classroom Observation Schedule

Recent classroom observation at Langford has been undertaken with a view to trialling an annotation system for use at both Roebourne and Langford. The system is being further examined but the observations showed that most Noongar use takes the form of modelling by the teacher with repetition or response by children. There is very little creative language from the children or student initiated talk. Most of the classroom management is carried out in English.

SALIENT THEMES

1 'The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues

Aboriginal languages are endemic to Australia and thus, we in Australia, have a particular responsibility to foster their survival. Apart from the ways in which language maintenance issues are embedded in cultural and identity issues within specific Aboriginal communities, the maintenance of Aboriginal languages is inextricably linked with our cultural and identity issues as Australians. Whatever our own individual ethnic identities, acknowledging, respecting and encouraging the maintenance of the indigenous cultures and languages of this continent are part of our contemporary Australian culture.

In Western Australia, the Education Department (EDWA) has initiated LOTE 2000 with the aim of ensuring that, by next year, all children in WA schools learn a language other than English until the end of year 10. In schools in Aboriginal communities, such as Roebourne, the language taught is generally the local community language and in urban areas with a sizeable Aboriginal student population, such as Langford, the language taught may also be a local Aboriginal language.

Roebourne, known as Ieramugadu, is in Ngarlama country. Yindjibarndi, also known as Injibandi and several variant spellings, is the language spoken by people whose original country was around the Fortescue River near Mount Pyrton, north to the Upper Yule River and east to Mungaroona Range. ((Sharp and Thieberger1992). Yindjibarndi is now the most widely spoken language in Roebourne and there are speakers in Onslow, Hedland and other towns in the Pilbara.

In the mid 19th century, the Roebourne was one of the world's richest pearling areas and local Aboriginal people were taken as slaves for diving or sale. Those who tried to escape this fate were often jailed, either at Roebourne or on Rottnest. By 1900 it had become difficult for people to live off the land and unless they were young and healthy enough to work on stations they had to go to government ration camps for food. Initially there was a camp in Yindjibarndi Country but eventually it was more expedient to move people to bigger camps on the coast. One of these was Roebourne Native Reserve. However, until the 1960s, many Yindjibarndi people continued to live on stations in Yindjibarndi country but when Aboriginal people became entitled to award wages, most of them were turned off the stations and ended up at Roebourne.

At the same time, there was a mining boom in the area and itinerant mineworkers flooded into the area. In 1975, living conditions on the reserve were very poor and it was closed down and families were divided and moved to state housing around the town cemetery, a culturally insensitive move and one which, combined with the heavy drinking and availability of alcohol due to the influx of miners, led to severe disruption of the community. Currently, the community is attempting to recover from decades of abuse and disruption.

As mentioned earlier, Ngarlama is the language of Roebourne but speakers of Yindjibarndi and Banyjima also live in the town. The language program started in 1992 and is in Yindjibarndi. In 1990 a program in both Yindjibarndi and Ngarlama was trialed but the latter was later dropped.

From this brief history, it is clear that the context in which Yindjibarndi is taught is inextricably bound up with complex issues around cultural and political identity. The co-ordinators of the Aboriginal LOTE programs emphasised that community support was essential and that no aboriginal language program would be initiated without it. Community support in Roebourne was confirmed by the fact that the local community was 'very proactive' in getting the language in the primary school into the feeder high school. 'As a community they formed a community they formed a committee and they put it to the school and said, "When the children go to Wickham District High we want Yindjibarndi to be taught, not French.'"

2 In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology

In contrast to Westerners who view knowledge as something that should be freely available, Aboriginal people traditionally have restrictions on what knowledge is available to whom, according to such criteria as age and gender. This may partially explain the received wisdom that Aboriginal languages must be taught by Aboriginal people. Indeed, the Project Officers for the Aboriginal language programs said that the language teachers in Roebourne are 'continuously consulting with elders even though they are full-time employees and have extensive knowledge themselves.' As the senior teacher at Roebourne said, she and the other teacher 'are always going out for information, we need to go for information, its a learning thing for us as well. Even though the kids are there and we are the teacher, we're learning this and that from the old people.'

Another factor is the extent to which Aboriginal people have already had their material and cultural properties appropriated and exploited so that it is generally seen as vital, by anyone involved in Aboriginal education, that ownership and control of the language teaching should be in Aboriginal hands. In the Aboriginal LOTE program this has been achieved through a team teaching approach where classroom teachers, AIEWs (Aboriginal and Islander Education workers) and community elders work together. Nevertheless, in the words of one of the Project Officers, the underlying philosophy has been that 'Aboriginal people will be in control of the teaching of their own languages in the state education system.'

3. Learner use of the target language inside and outside the classroom

It is always difficult to ascertain the extent to which languages are used in communities where there is a history of speakers being persecuted or ridiculed for speaking their language. In many Aboriginal communities people will not speak their language if there are any non-Aboriginal people present and the researcher generally heard the children speaking a variety English. Yindjibarndi is widely spoken by adult community members but anecdotal evidence suggests that children are using English more, even in private. This is hardly surprising in view of the impact of television and video on the current generation of children, which, according to the Aboriginal language teachers was why children's Yindjibarndi is 'mixed with English'. However, in view of the fact that it is only recently that Yindjibarndi has been introduced into the school curriculum and that people report that, in the past, they were punished for speaking it at school it is too early to assess whether and how a change in non-Aboriginal attitudes towards local language use will impact upon language usage.

4. Social conservatism, separation and parochialism

In Roebourne these are not really issues from an emic perspective for many of the children. According to the deputy-principal, most of the children will never go further than the area bounded by Port Hedland, Onslow and Tom Price in their entire lives. Thus, there is not the issue of conscious separatism sometimes seen in minority populations, rather, even now, most of the Yindjibarndi speakers will continue to live in the areas not very different from those in which they have traditionally lived and travelled.

5 Language status issues, issues of language variety and 'ownership'

One aspect of this issue was touched upon above, namely, the fact that, in the past the language has been stigmatised and, still is among many local non-Aboriginal people. Thus, having the language as one of the core curriculum units in the school is a significant step towards raising the status of the language in the eyes of the local non-Aboriginal population. There are very few non-Aboriginal children in the school but the parents of some were interviewed and were quite happy for their children to be learning Yindjibarndi, saying that 'It helps them get on better with the kids.' They also commented, 'It's either that or French or Italian or something, where are you going to use that here?'

The issue of language varieties is one that has potential for conflict. While it was certainly the case that the school had introduced the program with the sanction of the local community and there have been no volunteers to teach other local languages at the school, there is apparently some tension between local community groups over a current land claim. In multi-lingual communities there is often some resentment that languages spoken by the dominant group tend to be the ones used in school language programs. However both the LOTE project officers, and school personnel, have made it clear that they would have no problem with teaching more than one local language in the school if the community desired it and could supply speakers willing and able to work in the school.

6 Vulnerability of programs due to population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries

Since all schools in WA are required to run LOTE programs, there are no special funding issues about the Aboriginal LOTE programs. Because of the team-teaching approach used, they are a little more expensive than LOTE programs that use only one teacher. However, in several respects the system is quite economical. Initially, language programs would use someone recognised as a language specialist by the community (who would be paid as an untrained teacher), and AIEW and the classroom teacher 1. Gradually, some of the AIEWs felt confident enough to volunteer to work as language specialists themselves and it was at this stage that a training program was introduced, which, according to the project officers, 'give those people the skills to work as language teachers.' This training program consists of a total of twenty days of training. When the AIEW is working as the language specialist, s/he is paid as an untrained teacher. The classroom teacher continues to help with planning and is present during class time.

Initially the programs were extremely vulnerable, often depending upon one community member to be the language specialist. Not only in Roebourne, but also statewide, those elders who were teaching language in schools were often the same people in demand as hospital and court interpreters and in other roles as spokespeople for their communities. The training program has enabled younger speakers to train as language specialists and teachers so that most programs now have 'back-up' language specialists available. Nonetheless, the administration at Roebourne feels that there are no other people available with the skills to replace the current teachers.

7 Organisational issues e.g. timetabling, placement and streaming and parental involvement

In WA, language classes are part of the core curriculum and so do not run into the timetabling problems encountered elsewhere. Children are not streamed, they attend language classes with their class peers, whether they are home-speakers or not. This appears not to be a problem, partly because there is no emphasis on individual linguistic proficiency. The parents of a Yindjibarndi boy who had recently moved to Roebourne commented that learning some of the language had helped their son to settle into the community. In view of the code switching and mixing that is common, a little Yindjibarndi can go a long way.

There is very little parental involvement in the school. An open night, at which parents could view their children's work and interview the teachers, attracted very few parents, despite the sausage sizzle. However school assemblies are well attended and, as had been reported earlier to the researcher, it was clear that parents and other family members enjoyed items performed by children in Yindjibarndi very much. Moreover the laughter generated by puppet performances in Yindjibarndi made it evident that the majority of the community understood the language.

8 Student attitudes and student motivation issues as well as student versus parental notions and senses of identity

9 Issues of home language and school (English) language development

There are some problems with the English-language skills of many of the children. However, according to the school administrators, this was due to issues such as low attendance and home difficulties that to time spent on language-classes. The district director said that the problem with the school was the fact there was no recognition that all the children are second-language speakers of English and needed to be resourced accordingly. The issue of examining in detail the English-language ability of the children was beyond the scope of this project. It seems that it is a cause for concern, but that teaching the local language is not seen as an impediment.

10 Interaction between different programs and providers

This is not an issue, though a related one is the relationship between schools and the language centres. The project-officers made it clear that they did not think that the linguists who had been involved at the beginning had the appropriate educational skills to be useful in implementing the program. Some linguists however, have expressed concern about the fact that the school language programs are not addressing the issue of language maintenance and those involved in implementing them do not have the linguistic and socio-linguistic skills to do so effectively.

1 The classroom teacher is required to be physically present because of 'duty of care'. The extent to which s/he is actually involved varies considerably.

2 In a town in the same region, a successful year 11 program, popular with students and the community, did not have the support of the school administration and was scheduled to run at the same time as compulsory curriculum units. Inevitably, it was discontinued.

PART C

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The three models of community language maintenance which are contrasted in this study , and the definitions used to describe these programs are as follows.

- Bilingual education programs. These are defined as school programs where a proportion of the school curriculum is presented in the non-English home language of the students. (MODEL A)
- "Ethnic" school programs. These include after hours or weekend programs that are controlled and managed by the community concerned, and tend to operate outside the formal public education system. (MODEL B).
- Certain types of mainstream school program, particularly those where the indigenous or community language is taught as a school subject as part of the normal school curriculum. (MODEL C)

These are referred to as MODEL A for Bilingual Education, MODEL B for 'ethnic' school programs and MODEL C for mainstream programs. However, each model is in itself capable of greater refinement and therefore the models are contrasted for cost and benefit in the following typology. In the introduction the models are refined further as:

- Language Maintenance via Community Controlled Schooling (Arabic)
- Language Maintenance via Mainstream Schooling (Chinese, Italian and Khmer)
- Language Maintenance via Revitalisation and Revival (Noongar and Yindjibarndi)

The problem with the above typology is that it does not allow for cross-cutting issues. For example, the Noongar and Yindjibarndi programs occur within 'Mainstream Schooling', one of the Italian programs is in the Victorian School of Languages which is not considered 'mainstream schooling' in Victoria, while the 'insertion program' is in mainstream schooling, but in (at least partially) community controlled context.

For these reasons the study and final report documents results by State and research site: New South Wales: Arabic, Western Australia: the Noongar, Yindjibarndi and Khmer; Victoria: Chinese and Italian. For the purposes of the cost benefit analysis however the question of models and classification is critically important and indeed the Project Contract requires a "comparative cost benefit analysis of each model".

To achieve this objective the typology is developed through three further stages or procedures. Procedure One: uses the three broad program categories identified above (MODELS A, B and C) and relates these to the sites to produce an advanced classification called here the SITE MODELS. This is done by identifying twelve cross-cutting features. Therefore the three broad models are related to the ten sites and a matrix linking these to twelve program features is prepared.

The second procedure identifies the relative benefits of each SITE MODEL as reported in the site reports and research conducted there. The third piece of analysis or procedure enumerates the distinctive costs of each SITE MODEL (i.e. those costs that are *particular* to the SITE MODEL rather than general operational costs). This procedure is justified since generic education costs are not factors in the evaluation of the differences among various alternative models since these costs are common to all.

Procedure One: Determining SITE MODELS via cross-cutting FEATURES.

The site classification is as follows:

Site 1	Arabic Sunday School NSW (Staff interviews & observation)	MODEL B
Site 2	Arabic language students NSW (Student & family interviews)	MODEL B
Site 3	Khmer in Western Australia (Interviews, observation, testing)	MODEL A
Site 4	Chinese A in Victoria (Interviews, observation, testing)	MODEL A
Site 5	Chinese B in Victoria (Interviews, observation, testing)	MODEL A
Site 6	Italian A in Victoria (Interviews, observation, testing)	MODEL C
Site 7	Italian in Victoria (Interviews, observation, testing)	MODEL C
Site 8	Noongar in Primary School WA (Interviews, observation)	MODEL A
Site 9	Yindjibarndi in Primary School WA (Interviews, observation)	MODEL A
Site 10	Yindjibarndi in Secondary School WA (Interviews, observation)	MODEL A

The features which are distributed per research site are as follows. These will allow for a more refined set of model types to be determined[3]

A Mainstream/Special Provision/ Community-Controlled/Shared (code: M/SP/CC/Sh)[4]

B Secondary continuation/primary only (code: Sec/P-O)[5]

C: CL Literacy/Bilingual literacy/English-only literacy (code: CL/B/E)[6]

D: Ethnicity-religion selection/language/ geographic enrolment/Multiple factors (code: B/L/G/M)[7]

E: High Identity Component versus Functional Orientation (code: Id/F)[8]

F: ESL integrated into CL program? (code: Y/N)[9]

G: Parental involvement Extensive/Culturally Authoritative/General (code: E/C/G)[10]

H: Community Status: Transient or Settled (code T/S)[11]

I: Language Status in Public Policy and Australia generally: High or Low (code: H/L)[12]

J: Transitional/Mono-literate/Partial bi-literate/Total bi-literacy (code: T/ML/PBL/BL)[13]

K: External reward (code: Y/N)[14]

L: Language: Proficient Standard/Dialectal-Mixed Code/Passive/None (code: Prof/D/P/N)[15]

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[3] In all cases N/A refers to the non-applicability or indeterminacy of the identified feature for the site.

[4] Mainstream refers to regular school provision of the CL/Special Provision refers to the provision of the CL within the mainstream but organised via a specially established structure (such as a Government Saturday school, a hub or specialist language school), community-controlled refers to an arrangement for the CL within the community's auspices, control and arrangements/Shared refers to those instances in which there is an administrative or management sharing of the CL provision such as insertion classes in which the community employs and supplies teachers to mainstream school programs.

[5] Is the program conceived as a continuous provision through all stages of schooling?

[6] This refers to how the site itself delivers literacy education, i.e. it is assumed that all learners will be acquiring English literacy though the specific site may only teach the CL.

[7] This feature seeks to identify the factors that influence the enrolments in the site: are the learners participants in the CL program because their school happens to offer the program, or are they specifically selected for participation by family ethnicity or religion, or is the determining factor linguistic background? A combination is provided for as well

[8] Is the program predicated on a strong ethos of maintenance of home identity or is the orientation to the language principally functional with a low identity, or a nominal identity, component?

	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9	Site 10
A	CC	CC	M	M	M	SP	Sh	M	M	M
B	Sec	N/A	P-O	Sec	P-O	Sec	P-O	P-O	P-O	Sec.
C	CL	CL	B	B	B	CL	CL	CL-B	B	E
D	B	B/M	L/G	B/L	B/L	M	G	B	B	B
E	Id.	Id.	Id/F	Id./F	Id./F	Id./F	F	Id.	Id.	Id.
F	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
G	C	C	E/C	C-G	C-G	G	N	C-G	C-G	G
H	N/A	N/A	T	S	S	S	T	S	S	S
I	L	L	L	H	H	H	H	L	L	L
J	ML	ML	PBL	BL	BL	PBL	PBL	T	T	T
K	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
L	D-P	D-P	D	D	D-M	D-M	D-P-N	P	P-N	P-N

Procedure Two: Relative Benefits of Programs

The benefits of the programs are extremely disparate and strongly related to the specific purposes for which they have been designed. Generalisations towards identifying benefits can be derived from the salient themes that all program researchers have agreed upon and which are elaborated in the Resource Kit. It will be recalled that these are as follows.

1 The language maintenance objective is embedded in cultural, religious and identity issues.
2 Cultural authenticity, teacher knowledge/qualifications, staff development and methodology.
3 Learner use of the target language inside and outside the classroom
4 Social conservatism, separation and parochialism
5 Language status issues, issues of language variety and 'ownership'
6 Vulnerability of programs due to population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries.
7 Organisational issues e.g.timetabling, placement and streaming, and parental involvement.
8 Student attitudes and student motivation issues as well as student versus parental notions and senses of identity.

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[9] Is the development of English conceived as an integral part of the Program?

[10] Is the role of parents determinative in the determination of curriculum and cultural or linguistic dimensions of the program?

[11] Broadly speaking what is the wider social esteem accorded to the target language?

[12] Is the community of speakers/users/ or those identified with the target language a settled and stable in the geographic area or likely to be mobile?

[13] Seeks to capture an overall categorisation of the program type.

[14] This refers to whether there is a mainstream reward for CL maintenance (e.g. in Victoria to matriculate in a second language results in bonus points being added to the student's tertiary entrance selection rankings).

[15] Typical CL competence background of most learners. This generalisation refers to the likely actual competence of the 'typical' learner, or the majority of the learners, in the actually instructed language of the program.

9 Issues of home language and school (English) language development.

10 Interaction between different programs and providers.

Organisationally the models of provision fall into the following categories:

One:
After hours and weekend programs that are community controlled and relatively independent. (Part time schools of language and culture)

Two:
Ethnic or indigenous day schools that are like independent secular or religious based schools that offer a full publicly accredited curriculum but with dimensions valued by the sponsoring or founding community. (Full time schools in which a language/culture or religious dimension is a founding principle of the school and infuses the school's curriculum and other operations)

Three:
Commercial language schools that have been founded by a community to meet a perceived market of language maintenance demand.

Four:
Schools of modern languages/Satellite and distance provision/Hub or specialist language schools/Peripatetic teacher provision. These are arrangements within education jurisdictions to provide a wide offering of languages.

Five:
Community language as a LOTE. This nomenclature is used in many systems to refer to the teaching of a community language as a subject in a school curriculum. The students may be either or both background speakers and new learners.

Six:
Community language as some kind of bilingual education. The common types are: Transitional, Mono-literate, Partial bi-literate and Total bi-literacy. In bilingual programs typically the learners are background speakers of the non-English language, an ESL component is added to the program and both languages are used as media of instruction in varying ways with the above mentioned range target goals defined around likely literacy outcomes.

Seven:
Immersion education refers to instances in which the CL is the medium of instruction principally to non-background speakers and therefore its use as medium of instruction is a pedagogical strategy for target language learning, rather than language maintenance. It would be unlikely to find an ESL component.

Eight:
Shared community-education system provision. There are many kinds of shared provision. The most common is the practice known as Insertion classes. In this arrangement a community organisation hires teachers and makes these available to day schools for the sole purpose of teaching the target language.

Classifying programs from the assumptions of the language knowledge of the learners would yield a simpler list, perhaps along the following three categories.

First language speaker programs.

These programs are predicated on the fact that the students are speakers of the language. This holds for both indigenous and immigrant settings. The Chinese and Arabic, to a lesser extent the Italian and Khmer examples operate in this manner as do, for example, the Anangu program in South Australia which uses local languages (Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara) as well as English as media of instruction. In Western Australian LOTE programs, the more skilled speakers have a literacy emphasis in the LOTE. In the present research the WA indigenous programs only marginally fit into this category. This category depends of levels of proficiency, and degrees of literacy mastery.

Second language speaker programs.

Students undertaking these programs may have some background knowledge of the target language or culture but are generally not using the language on a day-to-day basis within the community.

Language awareness programs

This type of program operates in a situation where the language loss has been substantial and there are no documentation data that could be used to try to revive the language. Such programs may occur with Aboriginal studies or a Key Learning Area such as Human Society and Its Environment and many so-called community language programs of short term duration in fact operate as language awareness programs though not always consciously.

Ideally, there are three kinds of linguistic benefit that can be aspired to from language maintenance programs compared with foreign language programs

Linguistic

1 Proficient literate bilingualism
2 Enhanced acquisition of English
3 Enhanced capability to acquire third and subsequent languages

Emotional and Familial

1 Amelioration of cultural, emotional and familial conflict and distance
2 More integrated personal identity development

Cultural insight and competence

1 Awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity as a positive feature of Australian society.
2 Skill and competence in negotiating and understanding cultural and linguistic differences

Metalinguistic and Intellectual (Cognitive benefits)

1 Enhanced awareness of language and language differences
2 Cognitive benefits

Organisational and Administrative savings

1 Sharing resources, skills, contacts and expertise between day schools and community based organisations and institutions.

From the case studies it is clear that benefits of these kinds are attested in all settings.

A major part of the educational case for language maintenance derives from the idea that biliteracy will not result in deteriorated English language proficiency and indeed that early bi-literacy is associated with intellectual improvement and enhancement. In fact this is the widely supported conclusion of sustained empirical research. Additive bilingual and biliterate enrichment is an idea whose continuing refinement has been the product of more than three decades of research in several countries. One of its most influential representations has been in the now famous interdependence hypothesis; proposed most clearly by Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Researcher Dr Jim Cummins in the mid 1970s.

Linguistic interdependence is based on the idea that there is a common or shared proficiency that underlies the two languages of a bilingual. In education this holds that the two languages are intimately connected in bilingual children's learning sustaining "...the well supported finding that the continued development of bilingual children's two languages during schooling is associated with positive educational and linguistic consequences" (Cummins forthcoming and personal communication). In a forthcoming book Cummins reviews the now two-decade long assessment of the interdependence idea (and a related but distinct notion about threshold relationships in academic L1 proficiency and their relationship with academic L 2) (Cummins [JLB1] forthcoming, Cummins 1996). Cummins' and others' work on the interdependence (not merely the connection or association) between L1 and L2 proficiency in bilingual children is a counter to the 'time on task' approaches to learning English literacy, because it argues that under certain conditions less initial instruction in the L1 will result in equal or greater eventual L2 proficiency. These conditions are those of educationally supportive additive bilingual and biliterate education.

Learning second languages inevitably involves learning second literacies (Lotherington 1999) and can support English literacy as well. However, the interdependence hypothesis addresses maintenance of L1 and learning of English rather than second language acquisition of a foreign language, though the distinctions between these categories can fade in real life settings.

The relationship between languages (i.e. bilingual skill gained in schooling) and (English) literacy has been an important area of research for decades. The consensus from Australian and international research is that languages learning has either a neutral impact or a positive impact on non-English speaking background learners' English literacy performance, depending on which aspects of English literacy performance are isolated and how the variables are controlled. If the term 'cognitive advantages' includes verbal abilities such as concept and vocabulary knowledge, deductive verbal reasoning, and metalinguistic knowledge, then such 'cognitive' measures have been shown to be enhanced as a result of additive bilingual enrichment, if 'cognitive advantages' means 'non-verbal' only then bilingual enrichment is inconsistently or weakly associated with it.

If we take 'reading' as a proxy for literacy performance in more general terms then the bulk of reliable evidence similarly indicates benefits from bilingualism.

The research shows that the ability to read transfers across languages. This happens even when the writing systems are different. Studies cited in Krashen (1996) indicate that reading ability transfers from Chinese to English, Japanese to English, Vietnamese to English, Turkish to Dutch; Cummins (forthcoming) shows evidence for starting reading ability being dependent in L2 based on knowledge of spoken L2 at initial levels of reading but much enhanced when based on L1 reading (see also Cummins 1996).

Whether transfer is involved or not there are major issues of achievement. For indigenous children English literacy results have been consistently low and students from a language background other than English on average have lower English literacy levels than students from English speaking backgrounds (Masters and Forster 1997:20). Cahill (1996) has also reported similar difficulties for ESL learners.

For children who are learning languages where the writing system is based on Roman script the cross lingual impact of L1 (non-English) literacy is noticeable and positive. The data that I'm talking about are not even isolated just to children who study the language for a long period of time and achieve a high level of skill in it. There is supportive evidence from some Melbourne schools where English speaking children who had been studying Italian for short periods only of between 6 and 8 months. These children's English word attack and word preparedness skills were significantly better than those of control groups who were learning only in Italian or only in English (see Lo Bianco and Freebody 1997).

There may be something about the objectifying effect of learning that the same sounds can be represented in a different way, grapho-phonemically, that produces the idea in children that there is a kind of arbitrariness about writing. This seems to make it possible for children to understand the relationship between script and spoken language form more readily.

Children learning different languages with different scripts seem to develop an early awareness that even basic conventions like how print is represented on paper are arbitrary or cultural and can gain from these insights ideas about writing as a constructed artefact of human societies.

Procedure Three: Relative Costs of Programs

Achieving the language maintenance objective involves a wide array of possible forms of provision. Utilising the Procedures set out above the costs associated with these, and the relative benefit is set out in the tables below.

One:

After hours and weekend programs that are community controlled and relatively independent but which involve only part time educational provision of language and culture principally. This system can be summarised as community delivery via public subsidy. (Insertion programs are not included).

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Public subsidies: presently per capita Commonwealth grants and some state grants	Relatively Inexpensive Little Commonwealth or State intervention in programs Little Commonwealth or State involvement in teacher education, professional development, student assessment and management Co-operative ethos between providers from public and community based sectors Enhanced sense of multicultural policy and national validation of community role Possibly more authentic cultural and linguistic environment for language maintenance Theoretically limitless number of community languages can be supported	Poor quality control mechanisms for public authorities Highly variable program quality and teaching quality Distances language maintenance from whole education of child Infrequent and sporadic attendance Possible accentuation of home-school dissonance Likely low levels of language learning Likely low levels of language learning backgrounds of learners

Two:

Ethnic or indigenous independent day schools. This may be summarised as community controlled and managed delivery within an independent comprehensive educational provision.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
The public subsidy for recurrent and capital education costs applicable to any student in independent schools, means tested as per present arrangements.	Language maintenance absorbed within wider school activities and school ethos Little Commonwealth or State intervention in programs Little Commonwealth or State involvement in teacher education, professional development, student assessment and management Strong public status accorded to the broad objectives within which language maintenance plays a role Enhanced sense of multicultural policy and national validation of community role Possibly more authentic cultural and linguistic environment for language maintenance Quality control mechanisms that apply widely to independent education Integrates language maintenance into the whole education of the child	Distances potential learners of backgrounds other than the CL Poorer, recently arrived, dispersed or otherwise disadvantaged communities may be less likely to benefit from independent schooling as an option. Possible distancing of community members from other segments of wider population Culturally/Linguistically homogenous backgrounds of learners Few languages are likely to be supported

Three:

Commercial language schools or non-subsidised community provision. Market principles dictate provision or totally internal community provision applies so that there is no government financial contribution.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
There are no taxpayer costs	Communities with viable language revitalisation or maintenance prospects would be able to organise their own kinds of provision Market competition may arise resulting in a competitive array of options for families to choose from	Grossly distorts language maintenance options against poor, recently arrived, or otherwise disadvantaged communities No public affirmation of multiculturalism and language maintenance as public policy goals or principles Few languages are likely to attract provision

Four:

Schools of modern languages/Satellite and distance provision/Hub or specialist language schools/Peripatetic teacher provision.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Extensive provision within education departments of peripatetic teacher provision, specialist provider schools, trained teachers, materials and assessment regimes, satellite and distance education systems and support mechanisms. Relatively expensive.	Wide array of languages can be supported Language maintenance can be integrated into mainstream education All students and families can participate Quality control of teaching and curriculum is facilitated Extensive time allocations are made possible Bilingual and language as medium methodologies become possible Diversified curriculum and program input is made possible Public affirmation of language maintenance as a policy goal within the context of multicultural policies	Not all communities prefer to have their language maintenance activities taken forward within public education contexts Culturally authentic contexts are difficult to generate within systemic provision Bureaucratic methods of operation can alienate communities Requires ongoing and sustained attention from departments of government who often have shifting priorities

Five:

Community language as LOTE. This involves the provision of CL maintenance within mainstream education in the language as object mode of teaching.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
The costs of trained teachers, (either above-establishment teacher provision or the training of bilingual generalist teachers) Costs of professional development and collaborative teacher work Materials development	Mixed student groupings Can be integrated with ESL support A relatively wide array of languages can be supported but many fewer than with the above options Systemic demonstration of policy priority for early language study and relevance of languages to all students Potential for integration with all other curriculum areas within schools All students and families can participate Quality control of teaching and curriculum is facilitated	Much less applicable to secondary contexts than to primary contexts Experience has shown that programs tend to achieve inadequate results Creates problems of primary to secondary transition and language choice

Six:

Community language as bilingual education. This involves teaching language maintenance via the use of language as medium of instruction.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Marginal costs involve the training of bilingual specialist primary teachers able to offer the mainstream curriculum in at least two languages, the preparation of appropriate full or transitional bilingual material, the preparation of assessments in both languages. Alternatively bilinguals could be offered favoured access to teacher education programs and preferential hiring. In secondary contexts this will require increases in teacher numbers.	Provision of language maintenance is within the mainstream and can be integrated with general educational offerings Bilingual methodologies have been demonstrated to lead to more effective acquisition of the target language and to maintain the mother tongue effectively There are potential cognitive and intellectual benefits that derive from early bilingualism including enhanced There would be a public affirmation of a serious commitment to language maintenance The overall learning outcomes are enhanced	Relatively few languages will be involved Relatively large commitment from schools and systems Must be maintained for an entire educational cycle for derive maximum benefits Teacher training, deployment and utilisation mechanisms must be co-ordinated and work in harmony School level support is necessary Parent information and education is required to ensure that misinformation about goals and achievements is forestalled

Seven:

Immersion education

Immersion education as defined here is not strictly relevant to the language maintenance objective since it offers bilingual methodologies for those acquiring a language other than English rather than those retaining their mother tongue, the focus of this project.

Eight:

Shared community-education system provision. Insertion classes are the main mechanism involved here though other possibilities do exist.

COSTS	BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
The principal cost involved is the public subsidy, presently equal to the 'ethnic schools per capita' payment, made to the providing organisation.	Relatively Inexpensive Little Commonwealth or State intervention in programs Little Commonwealth or State involvement in teacher education, professional development, student assessment and management Co-operative ethos between providers from public and community based sectors Enhanced sense of multicultural policy and national validation of community role Theoretically limitless number of community languages can be supported	Reduced quality control mechanisms for public authorities Highly variable program quality and teaching quality Distances language maintenance from whole education of child Likely low levels of language learning Generally superficial language provision Many communities are unable to utilise this mechanism

In general costs escalate as there is a move from teaching the language as object to using the language as medium of instruction. The latter requires:

1 Proficient bilingual and trained bilingual teachers.

2 Translated and culturally appropriate materials

3 Immersion Experiences

4 Wider school co-operation and involvement

The additional costs per program however contain a very large benefit in enhanced acquisition of the CL, uninterrupted conceptual development for non English speaking learners as they acquire English, early and higher levels of bilingualism and, possibly, wider cognitive benefits for learners.

PART D

RESOURCES FOR ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

This kit of resources & general guidance aims to assist community language associations to establish and support programs in teaching languages and cultures that are spoken and prevail in the Australian community.

The types of programs mentioned and the resources listed are selected examples of what is generally available. It is not intended that the kit be comprehensive; rather, it aims to support and guide associations to seek specific information relevant to their specific circumstance.

This resource kit has been prepared by
Language Australia: *The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia* deriving from a project of research funded by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

During 1998 and 1999 the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs funded a team of researchers coordinated by Language Australia: The National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia to study a range of community/indigenous language programs. The Resource Kit is designed to offer school principals, ethnic/indigenous school communities, teachers and other personnel who are establishing community language or language maintenance programs, a practical guide to program design, implementation and evaluation.

An intensive and detailed study of a range of types of Community Languages has formed the basis of the project of which this Resource Kit is one outcome. These programs are in the indigenous languages Noongar and Yindjibarndi, Khmer, and the immigrant languages Arabic, Italian, Chinese and Arabic. The programs we examined are located in Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAM?

A community language program differs in major ways from a foreign language program. Although both aim to teach second languages, and both aim to achieve some level of skill in two languages, there are major differences in the starting and end points of foreign and community language programs.

Of course, all terms that we use to describe language programs are capable of meaning different things to different people in different contexts. Hence, every foreign language program somewhere has a 'community' behind it, unless we are teaching so-called 'dead' languages. However, the differences between community and foreign are significant. The following section provides a brief history of community languages education in Australia.

Community languages (CLs) is a term that came into use in Australia from about the mid 1970s. It was used as a means of distinguishing a language situation in which not only the migrants might use their first language but also the first and later generations of Australians might also use non-English home language for communication purposes in certain domains. It got over the problem of whether these languages ought to be termed foreign or migrant because neither of these terms captured the Australian linguistic situation (Clyne, 1991).

The development of consciousness about community languages has its genesis in the events of early 1970s. Prior to this the Child Migrant Education Program had been established in 1970. It advocated the development of oracy and literacy in English so that children could integrate into the society (Foster & Stockley, 1988).

With the Galbally Report (1978) the emphasis changed to the "plurality of Australian society" which was made evident in the range of values, lifestyles, political viewpoints, beliefs and roles (Kalantzis, Cope, Noble, & Poynting, 1990). The Report heralded in a period of multiculturalism and an overt acknowledgment of the plurality of the Australian society. In parallel with, and as a subset of issues involved with multiculturalism, was the issue of community languages. However, little had been done about the teaching and learning of CLs. In a ministerial response in 1978 to a question in the House of Representatives, it was acknowledged that there were "no fixed arrangements or guidelines for the funding of [ethnic] schools..." (cited in Foster & Stockley, 1988). In a NSW Federation of Ethnic Schools Conference Report of July 1980, the issue of community languages was flagged as the "single most important issue", calling for the introduction of structured, quality and on-going programs in the schools (see Foster & Stockley, 1988, pp68-69).

Throughout the 1970s there was a growing awareness of whole groups of people, the 'ethnic communities', and their particular needs. It has to be pointed out, however, that these needs were diverse and there was not always a consensus about them amongst the various ethnic groups. Kringas and Lewins (1981) in their study of ethnic schools in Sydney and Melbourne found that they were primarily seen as vehicles for promoting aspects of culture and its continuity within the communities. All participants agreed that ethnic schools had been set up to promote the languages but were less clear what that goal might be except as a generalised one to carry forward the culture of the communities.

Co-occurring with the developments in multiculturalism was a call from professional bodies such as the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, the Australian Linguistic Society, and the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association for a national policy on languages (Clyne, 1991), however the strongest push for a National Policy on Languages came from ethnic community organisations who took the lead in convening national workshops preparing an outline of what such a policy might contain (Lo Bianco 1987). Several years were to elapse before the call was heeded and a Senate Committee was set up to look at the language situation in Australia. The Committee acknowledged the disadvantageous position Australia found itself in by not having people in the government able to use the languages of the region near it, thus lending an impetus to the teaching of Asian languages.

There was a hiatus after the Senate Report, until the then Minister of Education, Senator Ryan, commissioned Joseph Lo Bianco to prepare a national policy on languages, taking into consideration the 1984 Senate Report, and embarking on separate wide consultation around Australia. The Lo Bianco Report (1987) went considerably beyond the 1984 report. The Report was well-grounded in educational and sociolinguistic principles and took language as a resource that benefits both the individual and the country. With regards to community languages the report recognised the role they played at many different levels of the society and supported their use for those purposes and initiated the first Commonwealth action in many of these fields as well as stimulating state policies which matched the Commonwealth initiative.

With education largely a state responsibility, the subsequent round of activities related to second languages, including community languages, shifted to the states. In those states where there was not a large concentration of speakers of community languages the focus of state activities was largely languages other than English (LOTE), and especially those LOTE that were used by Australia's trading partners in the Asian region. At about the same time the rationale for learning a LOTE or continuing to develop one's community language took on a financial hue. Public statements talked about the economic advantages of knowing a second language, especially the languages of our main trading partners.

Following the Lo Bianco Report and the LOTE initiatives in various states, the Federal Government developed the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) in 1991 (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991) out of a Green Paper that aroused much discussion. In the ALLP, it was stated that the community had played a significant role in the Commonwealth's Ethnic Schools Program (ESP) but had not had access to the "best teaching materials or the most effective teaching methods" (p.16). The Government proposed an increase of funding by 30% to $9.4 million in 1992 with the monies for insertion classes going to school systems, while funds for after-hours classes were transferred to government systems. Responsibility for offering support to community languages education continued a trend which commenced more than a decade and a half earlier.

The greater push for the teaching of LOTE in the late 1980s and in the 1990s resulted in some community languages becoming mainstreamed in the school system.

The funding for the teaching of community languages has since been provided by the Commonwealth School Languages Programme, which funds three major elements: Community Languages, Priority Languages and the National Asian Language and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS).

Distinguishing Language Maintenance

A major factor distinguishing language maintenance programs from foreign or general second language education is the issue of whether community languages aid or retard the learning of the school curricula and English. This question has been examined in both Australia and Canada (Swain & Lapkin, 1991; Swain, Lapkin, Rowen, & Hart, 1990).

Swain and Lapkin (1991) using self-reported data categorised heritage language students in a French immersion program (heritage is the equivalent of our community) into one of the following four categories: (i) has no heritage language, (ii) has a heritage language but is unable to understand the written form, (iii) understands the heritage language in the written forms but does not indicate any use of it, and (iv) understands and uses the heritage language in the written mode.

The results on a series of tests of French showed that those students who do not have a heritage language and those heritage language students who claim that they do not read or write in their heritage language performed equally on this test. The literate heritage students significantly outperformed the English background group of students. The conclusions the authors draw from their data is that a heritage language "has a generalised positive effect on third language learning" (p.638).

There has been a steady gathering of such data in the last 20 years which show that a well developed L1 that can cope with school type activities, will facilitate the transfer of academic skills to the second language (see, for example Danesi, 1991). The best explanation for this phenomenon has been provided by Cummins' interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1979; 1984). He claims that the effects of skills and proficiency in the mother tongue on second language development and achievement can be best explained if we posit that the two language systems are interdependent. Cognitive academic skills learned effectively through the heritage language transfer to the second language.

Cummins' hypothesis has some very practical ramifications for the role of community languages in education. It certainly provides some assurance to those who might think that any time spent in learning and consolidating proficiency in the community languages is time taken away from learning English better. It also exposes the myth of neurological space (Danesi, 1991) which refers to the belief once held that there is only so much space in the brain for a language and to learn another language would occupy the space that might have been available to the first language.

The interdependence theory also raises the question: Does it always follow that students should begin their instruction in their mother tongue first and then switch to the second language? If this type of reasoning were followed to its logical conclusion, then it would label all early immersion programs as violating the principle that the learner should begin his/her education in the first language. The immersion programs have shown that one can begin one's education in a second language and have no detrimental effects upon academic achievement. The key explanatory factors might be, as Cummins (1986) has argued, status and power relations, which are expressed in a variety of different ways in educational contexts, from being labelled learning disabled, to the legitimisation of a label through particular forms of assessment procedures. Giving status to CLs in formal educational contexts can only be beneficial for students provided it is accompanied by quality provision.

The more positive aspects of such educational contexts are best summarised by the findings of the Canadian Education Association survey in 1991, cited in Cummins (1995 p.136).

Among the advantages cited by teachers, parents and students were the following:

- positive attitude and pride in one's self and one's background;
- better integration of the child into school and society;
- increased acceptance and tolerance of other peoples and cultures;
- increased cognitive and affective development;
- facility in learning other languages;
- increased job opportunities;
- stronger links between parent and school;
- ability to meet community needs.

The disadvantages that were cited in the above survey are well known in the Australian context: the lack of good materials in the target language, the administrative difficulties due to class size, untrained teachers and so forth. One must not, of course, minimise these difficulties; they are real difficulties and have an impact upon the outcomes. They are not, however, insurmountable if there is a political will to ensure that all children have access to the best means of their education.

In discussions of community languages in education it is all too easy to see them in a negative light. They could be seen as being divisive, or costly, or too difficult to administer. This is a matter largely of perspective and value. Just as the workforce is valued if it is multiskilled, so ought the bilingual or multilingual product of the formal system be valued for the benefits bestowed upon individuals and the society as a whole.

Types of Community Language Programs offered in Australia

In terms of the types of programs related to community languages it appears that the types of programs identified in the Report on the Commonwealth Ethnic Schools Program (1983) continue to be valid descriptions of the current programs. The Report identified four major types of programs:

1 **After hours programs.** These programs offer on a voluntary attendance basis courses in a variety of community languages to school children after school hours. The objectives of such courses are to teach students who come from a community language background about that language and the associated culture.

2 **Ethnic day schools/commercial language schools/schools of modern languages.** These schools are conducted on Saturdays and for some languages in certain geographical areas they may be conducted by State Education Departments. Generally, however, they are conducted by the ethnic communities themselves with grants made available through the state Minister of Education.

3 **Community language as a LOTE.** The CL is taught as a LOTE and time-tabled by the school as part of its regular programs. The class may be composed of only students who are from the CL background or it may consist also of students who come from another language background.

4 **Insertion classes.** These are sponsored by the ethnic community organisations or government educational agencies within the curricula of government and non-government day schools. The classes are conducted during the regular hours of day school and may contain students for whom the language is an L2.

Under the second category there are two 'schools' that deserve a particular mention. The Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL) has been operating since 1978 and is administered from the Languages Unit of the Curriculum Support Directorate at Ryde State Office in Sydney. It enables secondary and TAFE students to study their background community language if they are unable to study it in their own school or college. The 6000 or so students follow the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate syllabuses in 23 languages.[1]

The other such school is the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) conducted by the Victorian government. VSL offers classes out of school hours in centres located in government secondary schools. The curriculum ranges from Year 7 to the Victorian Certificate of Education. In 1997 VSL offered 40 LOTEs in 28 centres around Victoria to 12 000 students. It also provided instruction through distance education to about 1000 students.[2]

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[1] See http://www.dse.nsw.edu.au/staff/F1.0/F1.1/features/saturday.htm for The Saturday School of Community Languages

[2] See http://www.vsl.vic.edu.au/profile.html for Victorian School of Languages

*Table 1. Summary of Community Languages Activity by State in 1997**

State	Number of languages taught after-hours	Number of students in after-hours CL schools	Number of students in day school (insertion classes)
NSW	44	32 659	20 000 (+ 8000 in Catholic systems)
VIC	47	28 000	12 000 (+ 35 schools Italian and 1 Indonesian)
QLD**	—	—	—
SA	47	8 527	333 (Italian)
WA	26	—	—
TAS	16	513	(No insertion classes)
NT	8	—	—
ACT	20	1 200	4 700 (Italian)

*Adapted from (1998).
**In 1999 there were insertion classes in 12 schools in Years 1-4.

The variety of programs that fall under the rubric of Community Languages programs reflects the particular sociocultural context in which the CL is embedded as well as the demographically defined context within which it is used. Thus in cities such as Sydney and Melbourne, for example, the demographics pertaining to some CL groups are such that it is relatively easy to set up a CL program as a LOTE program with an assured place in the school curriculum. In other situations, it may be less easy to set up such a program but an insertion class program may be, by contrast, much easier to develop. Where numbers (and other factors) preclude the offering of a CL during the school hours, it may be offered after hours or, as happens in many instances, on Saturdays.

Indigenous Community Language Programs

Australian indigenous languages have a special and distinctive history as Australian community languages, of course, uniquely qualifying under each of these descriptors.

The history of Indigenous Language Programs (ILPs) in education is not much longer than the history of Community Languages (CLs) in education in general. These two programs even share some of the rationale for language maintenance. However, the two histories are different in some fundamental ways and these past historical realities have shaped the present reality within which ILPs are interwoven into education.

The history of Aboriginal education has been encapsulated well in the 1995 Report on Aboriginal Education[3]. Traditional Aboriginal education was markedly different from the one that Aboriginal people were exposed to, not that there was much of an exposure in the early stages. The education provided to them, as the report indicates, was inferior and not designed to fully educate students. After neglect there followed a period of protectionism in the form of Aboriginal reserves where Christian mission schools operated, though still within the framework of previous thinking. By the 1940s the thinking about the Aboriginal people had changed and there were efforts made to assimilate them into the larger society – that is, they were to take on the "same customs and be influenced by the same beliefs as other Australians". When overall, Aboriginal students did not perform as well as non-Aboriginal students in the school contexts, there was a perception that they were not capable of higher forms of education for reasons such as home environment, lack of ability to persist, and other such explanations. This notion of deficit resulted in compensatory programs. However, this would appear to be tinkering at a microlevel because the fundamental driving force for the outcomes that were visible was the question of whether to succeed in education Aborigines had to give up, or compromise, their Aboriginality.

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[3] Commonwealth of Australia (1995) Aboriginal Education: Report of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education

The Select Committee of the House of Representatives (1985) recommended that Aboriginal people ought to have a greater say in their education. In addition, greater emphasis was placed on pre-school education and adequate preparation. But the report did address a number of key issues relating to Aboriginal teachers, Aboriginal independent schools and recruitment and training of non-Aboriginal teachers.

The setting up of the select committee is not necessarily an indication that nothing had been done about Aboriginal education previously. Sommer (1991) discusses how the Whitlam government announced their intention to provide Aboriginal children living in "distinctive Aboriginal communities" their primary education in Aboriginal languages. Northern Territory began some bilingual schools and by 1986 there were 17 such schools, having started with 5 in 1973 (Sommer, 1991). But Sommer also points out that there was not always the support to such programs from the top echelons of the Department of Education in Northern Territory and therefore they did not perform as well as similar programs had done in other parts of the world. The culmination of this bilingual saga in Northern Territory is that it announced at the beginning of 1999 that it would phase out the bilingual programs, even as, at the same time, they announced that the former senator Bob Collins would undertake a review of Aboriginal Education in Northern Territory.

Nevertheless by 1988 Hughes in his report[4] claimed that Aborigines remained the most severely disadvantaged peoples in Australia and recommended that the Australian governments set specific targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) participants in all sectors of education. A National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Education Policy was put into effect from January 1990. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy a National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was set up.

This report indicated that all measures of educational effectiveness showed improvements in ATSI students' participation and the outcomes, but the retention figures for senior secondary, while having improved, did not match the national figures. The report also indicated that on average, ATSI children had substantially lower levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy than other primary children.

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[4] The Report of the Aboriginal Education Policy Task Force.

The first public policy recognition of indigenous languages was in the National Policy on Languages which set up the first Commonwealth funding program, the National Aboriginal Languages Program. This was continued and expanded in the 1991 White Paper, Australia's Languages: the Australian Language and Literacy Policy.

A critical issue that now affects this field are the consequences of ideas that have been put forward and 'popularised' by Stephen Harris (see Harris, 1990). They deal with the different learning styles that Aboriginal children use in comparison with the styles used by other ESL students, for example, learning by observation and imitation rather than through verbal means, learning in real life situations and so forth. This grappling with learning styles issue is evident in an article titled 'Theorising Aboriginal Education: Surely it's Time to Move On' (Nicholls, Crowley, & Watt, 1996), and a rejoinder which asks what does one move on to (Malin, 1997).

These two articles, in a sense, sum up a dilemma of Aboriginal education, and by implication, the dilemma of Aboriginal languages education: what is it that needs to be done in order to ensure that Aboriginal children get the best education that they need? However, this question itself raises further questions: what is the type of education that Aboriginal children need? Few would argue with the answer that the children need an education that produces amongst other outcomes students with high self-esteem. It is the process by which this goal can be achieved that remains unclear.

It may be that projects such as the current one which is looking at best practice will provide pointers to the question asked by Malin (1997): moving on to what?

Program Types

The following program types cover the range of Aboriginal language programs that operate in Australian schools and reflect the terms used by the Australian Indigenous Languages Framework (see McKay, 1996). They underscore the diversity of Aboriginal language situations throughout Australia, the number of speakers of any one language in a particular geographical location and the development of Aboriginal languages which reflect expressions of modern life. Overall, there is a great amount of complexity in the Aboriginal language situation.

1 First language speaker programs (language maintenance)

These programs are predicated on the fact that the students are speakers of the language. They provide extension and development of students' language skills, and may involve the development of interpreting and translating as specialist skills. Such programs lend themselves for conduct as immersion type of programs.

First language programs in South Australia include Antikirinya at Coober Pedy Aboriginal School and Oodnadatta Aboriginal School, Arabana at Augusta Park Primary School and Marree Aboriginal School, Pitjantjatjara at Oak Valley Aboriginal School, Oak Valley CPC and Alberton Public School, and Pitjantjatjara/ Yankunytjatjara at Augusta Park Public School and Carlton Public School.

Various programs operate in schools whereby language and literacy are developed in the first language in order to facilitate progress in English, the second language. The Catholic Education System of Western Australia, for example, operates such a program called Making the Jump. Although the program was devised for teaching in the Kimberley Region of WA, the processes and strategies can be transferred and adapted to suit the local situation.[5]

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[5] See Rosalind Berry and Joyce Hudson (1997) Making the Jump. A Resource Book for Teachers of Aboriginal Students, Catholic Education Office, Kimberley Region

Similarly, the bilingual Milingimbi School in the Northern Territory uses what they call the 'step' model, teaching largely in the first language in early childhood, 15%:85% (English:Djambarrpuynga), gradually changing to 50%:50% in the middle ages and 75%:25% in the later stages of school. As a non-literate community, the idea is that students will gain literacy skills in their first language making for an easier transition to learning English. There are, however, some problems with this approach, as there are many distinct sounds in both languages that do not crossover.

2 Second language speaker programs (language learning)

Students undertaking these programs may have some background knowledge of the target language or culture but are generally not using the language on a day-to-day basis within the community. The language, likely to be used reasonably widely, attracts both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Indeed, it is held that teaching Aboriginal languages to non-Aboriginal students will improve cross-cultural understanding and help to further the process of reconciliation. For example, Pitjantjatjara (sometimes combined with Yankunytjatjara) is offered as a LOTE in some 20 schools in South Australia, with over 1000 students enrolled, including a significantly high number of non-Aboriginal students

3 Language Revival Programs

There are three sub-types of Language Revival Programs, reflecting the state of the language that is being revived:

Language Revitalisation. The language is still spoken by a small group of speakers and programs aim to extend this use to the younger generation of speakers in their community.

Language Renewal. The language is still spoken but only in part, as its full form has been lost, and the community identifies strongly with the language and would like to renew and maintain it.

Language Reclamation. The language knowledge is very limited within the community, and historical documentation and archival material are used as primary sources in efforts to revive the language.

Some examples of Language Revival Programs include:

- The Gamilaraay Language Program, established in 1997, operates at Boggabilla Central Aboriginal School encompassing Boggabilla and Toomelah communities. The language is not widely spoken, with English being the first language spoken for three generations. However, it is being revived with the integral involvement and knowledge of community elders, and the aid of anthropologists and historical documentation. Students learn to converse in simple sentences. The language is taught to primary students as a mandatory LOTE subject, and offered to students at Year 9 level and above. The program also operates in Walgett and Goodoga, and there are moves to establish the program in other schools, and to introduce the language as a TAFE subject. There is a Gamilaraay language committee which includes community members and other networks. A Gamilaraay dictionary has been produced.[6]
- In South Australia, language reclamation programs in Kauna are offered at 5 schools. The reclamation of this language is based on archival material and is largely at sentence level and smaller grammatical levels, and it has been used in a limited way at public functions and within the school community.

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[6] Contact Gamilaraay Language Program, Boggabilla Central School, PO Box 218 Boggabilla NSW 2409 Tel: 07 4676 2104, Fax: 07 4676 2442

A small number of non-Aboriginal students participate in the programs.

- Language renewal programs in Ngarrindjeri operate in 12 schools in South Australia, and language reclamation (and awareness) programs in Narrunga operate in 2 schools. These programs are offered to Aboriginal children with Ngarrindjeri, Kaurna or Narungga cultural and linguistic heritage, and whose first language is Aboriginal English. Small numbers of children from other Aboriginal language groups also undertake these programs (Department of Education, Training & Employment, 1999).]
- In Queensland some LOTE programs are offered in communities where students have extension of passive or limited knowledge in the targeted local language as is the case with languages in the Torres Strait Islands.
- Worawa Aboriginal College in Healesville in Victoria has run a program in Yorta Yorta and the Northern Territory language Gupungpungya for some years. One of its students won the Victorian Premier's VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education) Award for achievement in LOTE – Australian Indigenous Languages in 1998[7].
- In Western Australia a number of Noongar dialects are incorporated into a course offered to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in LOTE programs. These programs are available through to secondary levels.

4 *Language awareness programs*

This type of program operates in a situation where the language loss has been substantial and there are no documentation data that could be used to try to revive the language. Such programs may form a part of Aboriginal Studies or a key learning area such as Human Society and its Environment.

An example of a language awareness program that has some elements of revival also is the program that deals with the Pilbara languages, offered as a subject at high school level. The general aims of this course are broad, covering the importance of the indigenous linguistic heritage, developing an understanding of language change, decay or death, to developing some skills that will encourage the continuation of learning and researching of Aboriginal languages. At language level, the goals are to enable some simple communication in the languages of the area.

In South Australia, there is an R-12 Aboriginal Studies program. The early primary units (R-3) use a literacy approach, while Years 4-7 studies are linked to the theme of Society and the Environment, as are the secondary units covering people groups.

The way forward in indigenous languages education will straddle both the development of qualified indigenous teachers as well as appropriate materials for use in the classroom. To this must be added the need to use the considerable amount of well-documented information available about types of programs that produce high levels of proficiency in more than one language to develop special programs that work in particular contexts.

The increased range of Aboriginal language programs has been supported by a range of curriculum documents and resources. Frameworks have been, or are currently being developed at all levels. Australia's Indigenous Languages in Practice framework (1996) prepared by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia under a Commonwealth Government LOTEs grant is an influential example which has an associated package of resource materials. The wide variety of resources includes materials for classroom use, for example, Western Australia's Aboriginal Languages Resources File of black line masters, and various types of information and advisory material for teachers, such as the recent Reviving Languages (DETE, SA, 1999). Community information is another area of publication, including videos, of which Western Australia's Living Languages is an example.

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[7] Voice of the Land, vol.10, April, 1999, p.14

Other education systems have been involved also in program and materials development. Catholic Education's Kimberley region materials are well known. Programs for language learning for teachers and Aboriginal Education workers are another type of resource development occurring in various states.

Issues of language maintenance, access to high levels of English literacy and questions of identity distinguish community language programs from foreign language teaching. In the following sections the different starting and end points of these programs are discussed.

Different Starting Points

Linguistic

Community language programs typically assume either a linguistic background of learners in the target language or some attachment to the language that may not be an active linguistic skill but will involve emotional, identity or other socio-cultural background and knowledge. Typically foreign language programs either do not make any such assumption or make it only marginally. This is an important part of the difference between community oriented second language teaching and foreign language teaching. Although proximity of native speaker contexts is a key community language maintenance assumption, it is not always the case in reality (viz. indigenous programs of the study). Dialect issues are relevant to language maintenance issues in a major way which is not encountered in FL programs.

Language attitudes are also defining. This is because home dialect, or home variety, carries a legacy of association with the target language, which varies across languages and cultures. We can see the relevance of this point by contrasting Arabic which has a pattern of diglossia (i.e. a 'high' written variety and a number of 'low' spoken varieties that occupy distinct roles for users of Arabic, as well as having several major national-regional varieties) with Chinese (i.e. Chinese has many regional varieties in the spoken form with a standard written form).

Literacy is a key issue in understanding the distinction between CL and FL since many youngsters who have a 'background' in a community language spoken in Australia may only have a listening competence in that language, or even just an emotional and familial identification with it which is not likely to be present for a FL learner.

Emotional

There are key emotional variables that affect how children, parents and teachers (as well as other adults associated with a language maintenance program) relate to it and its goals. These involve the kinds of attachment that learners have towards the language, its speakers in general, its history, or to specific countries or contexts where the language is used. There is also a kind of language ideology as well which influences feelings of identity and belonging which are activated by the teaching of a language, and which may be absent in FL programs.

Sociocultural

Sociocultural factors also differentiate community language programs from foreign language programs. These can refer to the transported or new community of language users in Australia, in relation to the immigrant languages, or to who knows what in the target language as far as indigenous programs are concerned. The kinds of competence that can be expected are an important part of this as well.

Identity

Although identity is not a clear and unproblematical concept (it varies along children-adult, ingroup-outgroup, ingroup-other ingroup lines) it is clear that issues of identity are present in community language programs in particular kinds of ways. In general it is clear that notions of identity are multiple and contextually based. This means that most Australians belong to more than one identity grouping, and that any particular identity is made salient or relevant under some circumstances only.

For example indigenous/non-indigenous identity questions surface when contrasts are made, or discussions held about particular issues such as land rights, 'stolen generation', reconciliation etc, but these distinctions are not always relevant. Australian-foreigner distinctions may become relevant when the discussion turns to nuclear power generation or the effects of the introduction of the new currency, the Euro in Europe, or Australia's place in Asia. In addition people hold identity formations that derive from personal, physical, ideological, professional, spiritual, and gender factors and these may only become salient at certain times.

Despite the complications of multiple identity and the variable nature of identity, the context-basis of language and 'ethnic' identity help define the differences between foreign and community programs. This is because learners' 'belonging' or attachment to the mores and practices of the target language culture, and to the teachers as (likely) native-speaking representatives of that culture, are invoked in community language programs. For indigenous contexts these issues are invoked in special ways: identity of teachers, parent 'informants' and aides as cultural experts are more salient than in foreign language programs.

Different End Points

Linguistic

The aim of CL programs is generally similar to those aimed for by FL programs with some key distinguishing features. A CL program is premised on the idea that an accessible community, ie. a locally accessible set of domains for the use of the target language is readily available for the learner and not for the FL learner. In fact this assumption or premise may not always be justified by the actual socio-communicative realities of the learner's life and the program. Indeed within the study on which this Resource Kit draws it is clear that many of these assumptions are very complex, and even problematical. For example, communities are mobile; programs set up in one locality on the assumption of servicing the language needs of learners may become redundant over time as immigrant communities are highly mobile in the immediate post-migration years. Even when there is a relatively stable or accessible community, whether it is geographically contiguous with the school or not, the language used within that community is likely to be unstable linguistically, i.e. to be undergoing significant influence from English. In addition, there is likely to be a divergence, with the parent or immigrant generation holding onto use of the language and the Australian born or younger immigrant components diverging from it towards English use. The communication context therefore is likely to be a complicated bilingual one in which there is movement between the languages and bilingual dialogue depending on who speaks what to whom about what topic, when and where.

Considering these differences it is clear that programs based (even partly) on the premise of the existence of a 'community' speaking the target language, must deal with complexities and issues that influence the kinds of linguistic attainments that a program would establish as its goals. Local norms of actual communication may come into conflict with the prescribed norms used in native speaker contexts and negotiation, understanding and accommodation to these will be needed.

In indigenous settings related questions arise in respect of the impact of English on the target language, what kinds of competence in the target language are realistic, desirable or attainable.

Emotional

The main kinds of emotional issues that arise in CL programs that distinguish them are those which aim to inculcate an 'insider' relation with the target language. This is an important matter since CL programs often treat the language competence that is achieved or aimed for as 'insider' language capability rather than learning about others. However, this distinction must not be taken too far. In much current thinking about communication and second language education issues it has become common to think of the encounter between learner and 'native speaker' as the negotiation and elaboration of a cultural and linguistic Third Place (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat and Crozet 1999). In this kind of thinking all encounters that are cross-cultural and cross-linguistic share this characteristic of immersing the communicating parties in mutual processes of adjustment and accommodation.

Sociocultural

The notion of the Third Place also impacts on the kinds of socio-cultural visions that shape CL and FL programs. It is clear that the end point aimed for, or anticipated, in many CL programs so far as the socio-cultural realm of communication is concerned, in both immigrant and indigenous situations, involves serious potential for divergence between parents and children about appropriate behaviours and knowledge. This is apparent when CL programs are framed by parents and other adults in the context of their own position of marginality within the wider or dominant society. While this is not universally true the case studies of this research do show that there can be serious generational difference, even conflict, between the goals and expectations of younger and older CL program participants around issues of society and culture.

This matter is a significant one in marking differences between foreign and community language programs, though it must not be assumed that such questions are absent from FL programs; rather they are at a much greater remove and there are unlikely to be grounds for differences between parents and children.

Identity

The questions of identity are an elaboration and extension of those set out above. Identity cannot be seen as a fixed and unvarying entity but one that contains many and overlapping dimensions.

SALIENT ISSUES IN ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Language and Culture

The language maintenance objective is inextricably embedded in other cultural, religious and identity issues. 'Culture', however, is a problematical concept. Culture maintenance is a critical part of the community justification for language maintenance program. All the case studies provide extremely relevant and important information on this point. They range through a full spectrum from active, maintenance of 'parent authorised' culture in some immigrant examples, to 'reconstruction' of culture in the indigenous examples. There are also examples of hybridity issues in which cultural domains are mixed and heterogeneous.

Knowledge and Authenticity

In language maintenance programs issues arise as to the knowledge which is appropriate for teachers, questions of cultural authenticity, teacher qualifications, staff development and special kinds of issues of methodology.

Inside and outside of classroom language use

In language maintenance programs it is assumed more often that out of classroom language use (or encounters) are common. This is often not the case in reality since the domains that exist for the language are older generational ones principally. However if we assume that use of the language includes 'encounters' with it, encounters which can often be relatively passive ones (listening comprehension of older generation dialect, ceremonial or ritual language encounters etc) then the assumption is valid.

Relations with Mainstream Society

The case studies all raise issues of social conservatism, separation and parochialism etc as part of CL programs but not usually of FL programs. This is summarised here as relations between the particular community and the wider or mainstream community, and has effects on motivation and learning that impact on the program design and expectations.

Sociolinguistic Issues

Each case study proves the uniqueness of the context in which CL programs arise. Each also shows that language acquisition cannot be treated as a 'technical' operation devoid of context and setting since the differences across the programs are all derived from questions of the particular and special relation of language and society.

Program Vulnerabilities

CL programs which are justified according to local circumstances are vulnerable when these circumstances change. Population movements, staff turnover and funding vagaries all affect the viability of programs. The notion of 'community' becomes relevant. Does it refer to a 'community of speakers' of the particular language in the strict vicinity of the school, or more dispersed among the mainstream society?

Organisational Issues

The case studies of CL programs give rise to unique organisational issues e.g. time-tabling, placement and streaming, and parental involvement. These, in turn, flow from the idea of community and the connection between the justification of the program and its community base.

Student-parent notions of culture, identity and motivation

Culture, identity and therefore motivation issues are typically coloured by differences between student attitudes and student motivation versus parental notions and senses of identity. These are far less common in traditional FL programs.

Community Languages and English Proficiency

The complex issues raised by the sequence of learning of two languages, and the teaching of subject content and the effect this has on ultimate proficiency are not typically encountered by traditional FL programs. This is because FL programs commence from the assumption that learners are proficient speakers of English adding a second, additional and foreign language. CL programs often are bilingual programs in a developmentally cognitive sense; in that the mother tongue/community language is acquired, developed or maintained alongside the complementary development of English.

Program Providers

Often there are multiple providers for CL programs and these are public-private or a mixture. These can sometimes be commercial in orientation or strictly community based.

CULTURAL LEARNING IN MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

Language competencies and Intercultural competence

To 'know a language' is a very complex matter involving many layers of interrelated knowledge, behaviour and skill. Using a language that you know is even more complex since this requires cultural knowledge and competence. It is often assumed that cultural knowledge, sensitivity, and competence will emerge inevitably from linguistic competence. However, in recent years it has become increasingly clear that culture competence does not necessarily flow automatically from the learning of a second language.

The most general aim of second language education is to achieve communicative competence. Communicative competence is made up of several related but distinctive parts:

- **Grammatical competence.** This refers to the knowledge of the language code (pronunciation, vocabulary, rules of grammar, writing and its conventions etc).
- **Sociolinguistic competence:** This refers to mastery of how to use the code i.e., the appropriate application, in given situations, of elements such as vocabulary and register. Issues such as the relations and distance between the speakers, formality-informality, directness-indirectness, politeness rules etc are involved in sociolinguistic competence.
- **Discourse competence.** This refers to the capacity to combine language structures into a variety of coherent and cohesive texts e.g., poetry, and political speech.
- **Strategic competence.** This refers to the ability to enhance communication through knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

There is another category of competence that is labelled in different ways. It refers to 'how to get things done' in the language. This has been called *Actional Competence:* ' knowing how to convey and understand communicative intent in the performance and interpretation of speech acts and language functions' (Celce-Murcia 1994 57- 58). This refers also to the insight that language use involves action, i.e. doing things. Promising, threatening, inviting, apologising, marrying and other such actions are principally or totally conducted in and through language. Language teaching increasingly tries to assist learners to master this field of competence which is critical to being successful in using the language.

All of these competencies in language are affected by culture. 'Culture' has been a problem for second language education. There have been many approaches to the treatment of culture within second language education. In a detailed categorisation of classroom 'teaching' of culture Murphy (1988) identified four broad approaches:

- **The Civilisation Approach:** In this approach culture is treated as a homogenous and universal entity, ie culture as Civilisation. In the Civilisation approach culture is usually taught completely separately from the teaching of the second language. Culture is treated as a set of facts or phenomena and taught content within a curriculum of its own. Culture therefore is an object of study and not an activity that learners engage in.
- **The Audio-Lingual Approach:** In this approach there is no specific cultural aspect to the second language curriculum. The language curriculum aims to produce grammatical correctness and assumes that culture is a separate matter altogether which can be dealt with after linguistic competence has been achieved.
- **The Communicative Approach:** In this approach to second language teaching and learning it is assumed that culture can influence communication and therefore the teaching of culture is as an aid to the teaching of effective communication. In this approach culture refers to a series of non-linguistic elements required to enhance linguistic communication. So culture is only taught where it is needed for pragmatic communication.
- **The Intercultural Approach:** In this approach to culture language itself is seen as a 'system of signs'; that is, language is a cultural practice. Teaching language necessarily involves teaching culture. Language and culture are inseparable. Research into language use is used to indicate how language and culture are inextricable and how to teach culture in language, and therefore interculturalism.

According to Byram and Zarate (in Byram 1995: 25-27) there are four kinds of knowledge and skill needed for interculturalism in second language programs. The first of these relates to attitudes and values: "An affective capacity to relinquish ethnocentric attitudes towards and perceptions of otherness, and a cognitive ability to establish and maintain a relationship between native cultures and foreign cultures". The second skill and knowledge for interculturalism is the ability to learn: "An ability to produce and operate an interpretative system with which to gain insight into hitherto unknown cultural meanings, beliefs and practices, either in a familiar or a new language and culture". The third skill is a kind of knowledge: "A system of cultural references which structures the implicit and explicit knowledge acquired in the course of linguistic and cultural learning, and which takes into account the specific needs of the learner in his/her interaction with speakers of the foreign language". And fourthly, knowing how: "A capacity to integrate ...[the above]...in specific situations of bicultural contact, e.g. between the culture (s) of the learner and one of those associated with the target language".

If a person has gained the knowledge and skill identified above they would be considered an 'intercultural speaker':

> *An intercultural speaker is someone who can operate their linguistic competence and their sociolinguistic awareness of the relationship between language and the context in which it is used, in order to manage interaction across cultural boundaries, to anticipate misunderstandings caused by difference in values, meanings and beliefs, and thirdly, to cope with the affective as well as cognitive demands of engagement with otherness (Byram 1995).*

Competency Outcomes

Community language programs therefore aim for a different kind of cultural outcome from regular second language teaching, or the teaching of second languages based solely on linguistic objectives.

These outcomes can be described as Cultural Recognition Competence, Intercultural Interaction Competence and Multicultural Creativity Competence.

Level One Competence: Cultural Recognition

In the first intercultural competence the learner gains an insight into him or herself as a cultural being. Learners come to recognise the cultural dimension of everyday life. Recognising the cultural dimension of everyday life involves seeing peoples' behaviour as being influenced and shaped by culture, and not random, idiosyncratic or perverse. We can consider culture as being behaviour patterns that we 'take for granted', or assumptions we make about how things should be, and what we consider to be the 'natural' way that things are done, or thought about. We tend to view our beliefs and behaviour as natural while the beliefs and behaviour of others we may consider strange, odd, exotic, difficult or funny. This is because our cultural values are considered natural because most of the time we live in communities with others whose cultural values are like our own. We tend to notice only things that are different, contrasting to our own.

We tend to regard our language and behaviour as being 'natural' and others' language and behaviour as being 'different' or odd. Sometimes of course we also regard others' behaviour as being difficult or problematical. Problems, both trivial and very serious, can arise when there are no shared histories and when a tendency to see difference negatively becomes established.

Self-knowledge is the first part of the of Cultural Recognition Competence. Others' attitudes and behaviour, skills, knowledge, interests etc are as culturally shaped as our own. To achieve this competence the course asks the learners to become trained observers of their own language behaviour. This is a productive method for advancing the attainment of these goals, language learner acting as a scientist of culture, an ethnographer, using the methodology of anthropology, i.e., participant observation.

Level Two Competence: Intercultural Awareness

Recognition is an important first step towards the goal of intercultural competence. However on its own, recognition is insufficient. After recognising the cultural dimension of life the course aims to have this recognition extended to others. If our lives are influenced by the culture of which we are a part then this must also be true of others' lives and culture must be as taken for granted, assumed and made natural for them as it is for us. In short, the course aims to extend cultural recognition to others' behaviour. The purpose of this is to impart knowledge that interaction across cultures and languages can be aided by such recognition.

When we communicate across cultures we can see that we draw on our cultural assumptions and that in cross-cultural communication we should make some of these assumptions explicit and openly discuss cultural differences. Such negotiation across culture can lead to skills in effective cross-cultural communication. We will be able to predict points of possible difference, we will learn where we might need to point out openly why our thinking or behaviour is the way it is, and we will know how to interpret some of the actions and statements of others in a better light.

Learners have recognised the workings of culture in their own lives and in the lives of others. Different cultural practices exist because different communities of humans have responded to identical human needs within radically different environments.

Among these common needs:

- **Economy:** functions and roles that derive from shelter, food, wealth;
- **Community:** relations within institutions of the culture such as family, work, social, and recreational;
- **Aesthetics:** the appreciation of and practice of festivals, art, theatre, music;
- **Identity:** formal and informal roles that society allocates to its members.

All these are communicated, i.e. they are made in language, by language and through language. Language is the critical and common part of all cultural dimensions. In this communication there is also contest. Cultures are not fixed for all time. They change and evolve. We make culture as well as being made by it.

Specific cultural practices are arbitrary. The different experiences of different communities in relation to the common needs result in different practices of culture. The practices of culture are the shared ways that a given community has evolved of interpreting its needs in a given environment and of making the resulting behaviour a taken-for-granted set of assumptions. Issues of whether some cultures are better, nicer, more legitimate, more correct etc do not arise since each can only be understood in their own terms. However, in the contemporary world there is rapid globalisation, travel, international communication, multiculturalism and so on. These developments make intercultural encounters more and more common.

Developing skills and awareness of other cultures, interacting with diverse cultures to accommodate and manage behaviour successfully, to negotiate respectfully with acknowledgement of others' legitimate experiences are both skills and knowledge that emerge from learning about new cultures and languages. The course introduces the idea of the third place. This means that when we interact across cultures, ie that when we communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds both parties enter into a process of adjusting their expectations and behaviour so that an effective and efficient encounter can occur. In this process the interaction should be without negative judgment, without pressure on one or other party to abandon its cultural practices, there should be no ethnocentric elements in the encounter. From recognising the cultural dimension of ourselves we have progressed to being competent in encounters with others from different cultures.

Level Three Competence: Multi-cultural Creativity

A third and maximal competence aspiration of the course is that of creativity within difference. At the first level we recognise ourselves as cultural beings. In the second we extend this insight into others and start to reflect on how interactions across cultures can be more efficient and more effective when we proceed with respect and knowledge of the impact and presence of culture.

The course now aims to impart a sense that although culture is very important in daily life it is not immutable. In fact while we are shaped by culture when we live in a community whose cultural practices, norms and values we share, we also shape and impact on culture itself. Cultural practices come into being via communicated and agreed common responses to common needs in given environments. However there is always emergent culture, new needs, and contest over the practices of culture that have been adopted, claims for different, more equal or renewed arrangements.

In multicultural environments new forms of culture emerge. We can call these hybrids. Hybrids emerge because in the contemporary world there is vastly expanded contact among peoples in all parts of the world. Rice eating may originally be Asian but it is now universal, Buddhists can be found in Norway and Argentina, just as there are Catholics and Methodists in Indonesia and Botswana. Australians can speak Khmer just as Cambodians may learn Icelandic. Dress types are changing, jewellery wearing, artistic design patterns are shared across the world, and when cuisines interact what happens is that the practised taste traditions (the cultures of eating) which were specific to given environments become combined with other traditions of which they were not originally a part. Japanese food aesthetics and taste preferences are popular in England and California as are tomato (originally South American), bocconcini and basil salads in Japan and Thailand. Some kinds of tourism are an economic manifestation of this. German and Japanese tourists in Australia, in their very different ways depending on their original culture, add knowledge to their existing knowledge of building, arts, cuisine, daily life, family relations and so on.

Similarly, Australians who visit the Vatican, for example, encounter art, architecture and a whole host of other possibilities which are versions of what Australian culture have also created.

Under the multicultural creativity competence we can move towards appreciating the mixing of cultures and of the rich traditions that are increasingly available. By creativity within multicultural contexts reflexivity can be stimulated that can encourage creative solutions to problems in which language and culture play a part.

In this competence diversity is seen as a potential resource, difference is regarded as positive, similarities are seen as opportunities for collective endeavour and evidence of common experience. However, we can also note from the multiplicity of forms that exist that cultures can, do and have changed. We can interact in directly transforming cultural relations among groups and within ourselves. Within this competence we can develop skills that enhance the performance of work teams which increasingly in a global economy will be constituted from different talents, backgrounds and skills, and we can support local responses to the forces of globalisation.

Here the self through active engagement with otherness is also able to transcend difference and celebrate, create and encourage new forms of human sociality, culture and language.

In summary, there are three competence outcomes that the course aims to achieve. The first is cultural recognition, the second is intercultural interaction and the third multicultural creativity.

Empathy

Empathy (which Lohrey 1998 has described as a cool head with warm heart) is both an objective and a methodology. Indeed empathy is a key underlying state for the competencies identified above as well as a method of teaching language and culture.

Empathy breaks down when:

- there is too much emphasis on unity (assimilation pressures result)
- there is too much emphasis on differences (separation pressures result), or
- there are rapid or severe swings between too much unity and too much difference.

These considerations are drawn from Lohrey's (1998: 8-9) suggestion that empathy needs to be taught explicitly rather than educators assuming that empathy results as an incidental outcome of education or that empathy emerges inductively from other processes of education. Lohrey identifies two steps that are essential in teaching empathy.

- identify and recognise distinctions
- integrate these distinctions into a larger whole

To teach empathy in formal education via these two steps we need to make explicit efforts at extending boundaries held by learners (whether these are cognitive or identity boundaries). We need to establish common experiences of meaning-making among learners, to actively support social interaction and self-knowledge. Empathy is often associated with awareness, or sensitivity, and in that way would seem to be appropriate only to the early stages of the present course. However, empathy here is as a methodology for achieving competence in interculturalism and as such is an important part of the teaching and maintenance of community languages in community settings.

Culture, and Cultute in Second Language Education

The concept of culture, and its relationship to language is a central issue of the course. The approach to teaching culture is to see culture as inseparable from language. In addition culture is not seen as a fixed, homogenous entity that can be taught as a series of facts. Rather culture is seen as complex and dynamic. Culture is best understood as containing at least three elements; the "archaic, residual and emergent cultures'. (Jayasuriya 1992 [after Williams (1977:63]).

This definition is useful because it avoids two common but unacceptable tendencies in discussing culture. The first is to overstate the importance of culture and to consider culture fixed and rigid. Humans are shaped by culture but we are not prisoners to culture. Overstating culture's importance suggests that we inherit a pattern of behaviour, beliefs and values from the past and that these determine what we are able to do in the present. In situations of conflict between different cultural groups, cultural differences are seen to lock these groups into inevitable conflict and misunderstanding, prevented by their cultures from ever interacting effectively with each other. The opposite extreme is also unacceptable. This neglects the importance of culture altogether as though culture has little impact on daily life, relegating culture to arts or high literature. Conflict is seen therefore to derive only from economic, political or individual differences.

Jayasuriya's approach allows us to see the significance of culture for social behaviour, especially for communication as a form of social interaction. According to this approach in everyday social behaviour and communication we have available the three layers of culture.

- The **archaic culture** refers to tradition and identity. This connects people to the historical patterns of the past. The past is drawn on in the present when we seek identity and connection with the past. Often the archaic culture is found in present communication along the forms of common sense. Common sense is a sort of everyday philosophy in which we interpret the circumstances, events or phenomena in the present according to past interpretations. Sayings, proverbs, popular wisdom etc are forms of the archaic culture alive in the present.

- The **residual culture** refers to the lived and current patterns of behaviour. This includes the 'ways of life' approach to culture that sees all behaviour as cultural as well as the 'artistic and literary' forms of culture.
- The **emergent culture** is the making of culture in the moment. We enact and communicate culture, drawing from the archaic patterns and the residual patterns. This dimension of culture is dynamic since we can impact on and change cultural patterns. Culture is also subject to challenge and development. New words enter the language almost every day. These reflect and make changes in the culture. Languages borrow from other languages, and in this way, cultures also develop and change. New expressions show that language influences culture and is influenced by it. Over time, however, these emergent cultural changes become habits and therefore become residual, over very long periods of time they can become part of the archaic culture that we inherit.

In this sense culture is both solid and fluid. We inherit much of it from the past, some of the past patterns we live out daily, and others we make and shape each day. New meanings, new possibilities, can enter culture which is never static, but always subject to change from within and from without. Alongside change there is also pressure for no-change, for continuity, preservation and tradition. In the archaic culture we see continuation and reproduction of old forms, in the emergent culture we see change and development, in the residual culture we see what is present practice. Individuals can also select from their cultural traditions.

Some parts of culture are observable and some parts are not. While we can identify readily arts, crafts, dances, habits, dress, customs, and language as phenomena of culture, there is a vast field of culture that is not observable. Some of the non-observable culture will involve: perceptions, beliefs, values, norms, roles, assumptions, expectations, orientations to time, space, learning styles etc. These non-observable aspects of culture are often assumed to be 'the normal way that things are', or 'just life'.

We can call this process 'naturalising'. Naturalising culture means that we consider cultural behaviour to be 'just life', or the 'normal thing', or the 'natural way that things are'. But because the common things that we and other cultures do, are done differently, neither 'our way' nor 'their way' can be considered natural. We have an 'emic' or insiders' experience with our culture. We are inside it and it is inside us. Therefore our way of eating, of relating to our parents, of thinking about death, of believing that we can or cannot communicate with the deceased, of whether herbs and natural medicines are good or bad, of how we think about animals, or how we speak to close friends compared to religious figures, all of these and a myriad of other daily behaviours we are apt to consider 'normal'.

Naturalising is common. It involves the assumption that our ways of being are not in fact culture but just the natural normal way of being, and thinking, and doing. For outsiders (the 'etic' perspective), however, these ways of being, thinking and doing, are seen as 'selections', or arbitrary forms, since the outside observer does common things in different ways.

Ethnocentric judgment, stereotyping and even racism arise often because the culture concept is very complex and submerged within the practices of life. We can appreciate the art of another culture more easily often than those aspects of that culture that are to do with everyday life, because we do not identify those practices as cultural.

A celebrated researcher of Australian indigenous languages has commented that when confronted with very different language and cultural traditions we can be left 'tongueless' and 'earless' (Stanner 1979: 230). We cannot hear what people say nor say anything ourselves.

STATE & TERRITORY POLICIES ON COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

'Immigrant Origin' Community Languages

New South Wales

The official policy of the NSW Government is entitled 'Organising Community Languages in NSW'. While this document is currently undergoing review it still serves as policy for community languages programs K-6 in government schools. The introduction of a community language in a school is based upon a number of factors, including community support. Specialist teachers of community languages are appointed to schools in addition to normal staffing. Their working conditions are similar to their mainstream colleagues.

The policy provides guidelines in the following areas:

1 Time allocation – 2 hours per week per student/group

Grouping of students. This is left to the school to decide taking into account their own particular context, including the size of the school and the number of students wishing to undertake classes in community languages. Such groupings may consist of:

- native speaker groups, K-2 or K-6
- non-native speaker groups K-6
- mixed groups
- whole-class groups

2 Linguistic and administrative feasibility of a number of different ways the CL programs might be conducted:

- withdrawal from class, offering the possibility of grouping students according to level of proficiency
- whole mainstream class, giving opportunities for integration of some subject matter, as well as providing an

opportunity for mainstream teachers to participate in the language learning program

- team teaching with the mainstream teacher – this is recommended only for the very early stages and as a short-term measure
- team teaching with other CL teachers
- combination of whole class and separate groups

3 The document recommends an integrated approach to the language program, incorporating the normal curriculum as much as possible.

With regard to independent schools, The Association of Independent Schools, NSW, has provided the data. It administers Community Languages funds made available through government grants on behalf of non-Catholic independent schools. Schools receiving such grants undertake a commitment to use the general educational guidelines provided by DETYA under its School Languages Program. In 1988, twelve schools received such assistance. These twelve schools encompassed the following seven languages: Armenian, Arabic, Sanskrit, Hebrew, Modern Greek, Russian and Auslan. The programs offered by these schools cover a range of the different types discussed in the next section.

Victoria

In Victoria, the report of the Ministerial Advisory Council on Languages Other Than English (1994) has provided the broad framework within which LOTE, and community languages, are offered to students. The report recommends that policy should be guided by five major principles, amongst which is the goal of "preserving and expanding the linguistic resources already present in the Victorian community and the need to respond to regional and international factors [which] require a broad policy of multilingualism" (p.18). The Report acknowledges that a multilingual policy "requires a variety of providers; mainstream schools, the Victorian School of Languages and the After Hours Ethnic School Network" (p. 23), with the latter two deserving strong support because "no day school system can cater adequately for the number of languages important to this community" (p. 23). Ethnic schools register with the Ethnic Schools Secretariat of the Directorate for funding support and these schools operate within program guidelines developed by the Directorate. About 40,000 students (1997 figures, see Table 1) attend after hours CL classes or are involved in insertion classes.

According to the recent report of the Committee of Review on the Victorian Certificate of Education of 1997 about 40 LOTEs are available for study. Many of them are community languages. The Department of Education's LOTE Strategy Plan supports languages of community significance through to VCE level. However, it also acknowledges that some languages may have to be offered through the Ethnic Schools or the Victorian School of Languages because of small enrolments.

South Australia

In South Australia, the Languages other than English Plan 1998-2007 is the guiding document for the delivery of all LOTEs within the Department of Education, Training and Employment schools, including community and Aboriginal languages. The proposed plan places an emphasis on "quality programs" integrated into the broad school curriculum. The plan proposes to support CL programs through the establishment of language focus schools and close collaboration with the ethnic schools sector. At the time of writing this policy is being finalised and is expected to be available to the public.

Queensland

There is no official policy on community languages in Queensland except as part of the overall LOTE strategy in the state. The community languages programs are offered in 12 primary schools as insertion classes at the moment. These programs cover Years 1-4. In addition, the Ethnic Schools run their own schools and provided they meet the Queensland Education guidelines they are provided with some financial assistance. The Education Queensland Ethnic Schools Policy encourages state schools to make the school facilities available for use by ethnic schools. The Policy also recommends that classes conducted by Ethnic Schools be open to all children regardless of their language or cultural background or ethnic origin.

In 1998 there were 3 210 students attending 34 Ethnic Schools that had been funded by Queensland Education. Some of these schools had more than one venue. In addition to these data, there are at least a dozen schools that are not funded because they do not meet the guidelines for community languages funding.

In the Catholic school systems in Queensland there are community languages programs in Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese but no figures are available.

The Independent Schools Association does not collect data in this area.

Western Australia

The Western Australian Education Department provides support for the teaching and learning of community languages through funding the operations of the Ethnic Schools Association of Western Australia. The Department has a set of criteria that ethnic schools must satisfy, amongst which are that a minimum of 90 minutes of instruction in the CL must be provided per week and that it be open to all students regardless of their ethnic background. Twenty-five CLs are taught through this arrangement. Figures provided by the Western Australian Ethnic Schools Association indicate that there are 28 387 students studying community languages at 183 different venues, the largest group by far being Italian learners (over 25,000) followed by Chinese (almost 1790) and Vietnamese (473).

The Department accounts for community languages within the state system as part of LOTE. The following five languages cover the bulk of the students undertaking LOTE K-12: French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese. Other languages offered are Cambodian, Chinese, Modern Greek, Signing, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Tasmania

The Tasmanian Department of Education supports 16 Community Language Schools. These schools are able to access the Department's officers for curriculum advice and the copying of materials and some curriculum materials are made available to schools at no cost[8]. Numbers involved in 1988 were 388[9].

The Catholic Education Office in Tasmania reported that currently there was no official policy about the teaching of community languages. However, a small Commonwealth grant for community languages is paid to the Catholic Education Office to assist the Italian community.

Northern Territory

In recognition of the special demographics and geographical location of the Northern Territory, priority is given to Aboriginal languages and Indonesian. According to 1998 figures over 12 000 students are studying Indonesian and just under 4 000 indigenous languages.[10] Other languages taught as LOTE are (given in order of number of students): Italian, Japanese, German, French, Modern Greek, Chinese (Mandarin), Spanish and Auslan.

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[8] From DoE website: http:// www.tased.edu.au/education/learn/lote/commlang.htm - 1998.

[9] Figures from Department of Education, Community & Cultural Development fax (1/10/98).

Australian Capital Territory

In the ACT the community languages teaching is conducted by the Ethnic Schools Association who manage the funding and the running of these schools. There are 29 such schools currently operating in ACT with an enrolment of about 1300 students. These schools operate after school hours and on weekends.

Indigenous Community Languages

New South Wales

Board of Studies NSW has developed a framework to facilitate the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools. This was subject to Aboriginal community ownership and agreement (NSW, 1998). Figures provided by the NSW Department of Education and Training show that there are 9 schools offering Aboriginal languages at K-6, and one school at the secondary level (1998).

Victoria

Koorie 2000, launched in February 1997, provides the policy framework through which the Victorian Department of Education delivers programs aimed at improving educational outcomes for indigenous students. The strategy strengthens and formalises the involvement of Koorie people in educational decision-making and builds on the joint partnership between the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. and the Department. The approach involves devolution of responsibility for resources and decision-making to eight Regional Koorie Educational Committees comprising Department and Koorie community representatives. Figures provided by the Victorian Department of Education show that an Aboriginal language is offered at K-12 as LOTE and there is an independent secondary school that also offers an indigenous language.

South Australia

The policy for indigenous languages operates within the broad framework of the LOTE policy and will be available as soon as the policy document is ready (LOTE Plan 1998-2007). Amongst the broad directions is the goal of maintaining and developing South Australia's cultural and linguistic diversity through the provision of first language maintenance and development programs. The Department of Education, Training and Employment works cooperatively with the Anangu schools, of which there are 10 teachers of some 750 students. In addition there are around 60 school programs involving over 2 500 students focused on nine indigenous languages. The programs types cover L1 maintenance, L2 learning, revitalisation, reclamation, renewal and language awareness. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children are involved in these classes (Department of Education, Training & Employment, 1999).

Queensland

Policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are framed within the issue of equity and use the discourse of equity in describing Education Queensland policies. They are that ATSI students, whatever their backgrounds - urban, rural or remote - should achieve equitable educational outcomes within a supportive environment.[11] The outcomes statements are linked to four issues as they relate to ATSI education: (i) varying forms of racism and discrimination (ii) culturally inclusive curriculum (iii) teacher expectations, and (iv) effective school/community partnerships. Figures provided by Queensland Education show that there are 51 Aboriginal programs of various kinds being offered in Queensland.

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[10] From NTDE website: www.ntde.nt.gov.au

[11] Qld Education webpage - tar_abor.htm.

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission has a policy (dated August 1996) which advocates practices that will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to have access to quality Catholic education. Such education would be sensitive to the histories, cultures, values, beliefs and lifestyles of Aboriginal societies as well as the Torres Strait Islander societies. Catholic schools are also provided with a set of implementation issues and are urged to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in educational decisions that affect them.

Western Australia

The Aboriginal languages policy is a part of the LOTE 2000 policy developed by the Western Australian Ministry of Education to provide young people the skills and understandings to communicate effectively and appropriately in a language other than English. Aboriginal languages programs are a co-operative effort between the school and the Aboriginal community. The language or languages to be taught are identified by the Aboriginal community and a 'language team' consisting of school and community members is set up (from LOTE 2000: New Horizons put out by the Ministry of Education, WA). According to the figures provided there are 46 schools teaching Aboriginal languages as LOTE, some using a number of different types of programs within a school. Catholic schools in the Kimberley region have 13 schools offering an indigenous language covering some 1 800 children.

Tasmania

There currently are no Aboriginal language programs in this state, however they may be introduced in the future.

Northern Territory

The policies of Northern Territory are undergoing change. The Government has already flagged the phasing out of the bilingual language programs on the grounds that they are not achieving one set of linguistic outcomes they were supposed to; namely, that the development of literacy in an Aboriginal language will have a beneficial effect upon the development of literacy in the English language. More fundamentally, in October 1999, the NT Government released Learning Lessons, the independent review of indigenous education in the NT undertaken by former senator Bob Collins, which made findings and recommendations in relation to indigenous education[12]. At April 1999, there were 21 bilingual programs in 17 languages[13].

Australian Capital Territory

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education policy is in line with the Statement of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and the Joint Policy Statement of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The development and implementation of programs in ATSI education are carried out in consultation with the ATSI communities through formal and informal forums. Like the Queensland statement, the ACT statement includes equitable and appropriate education outcomes for ATSI students but it also mentions the issue of maintenance and development of indigenous languages.

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[12] download from NT Department of Education website; www.ntde.nt.edu.au

[13] Voice of the Land, Vol. 10, April, 1999, p.1.

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

- Culture Teaching Guidelines
- Intercultural Teaching Guidelines
- Tips on how learners can maximise informal and naturally occuring target language contexts
- Popular ideas about language learning

TENDENCIES IN DESCRIBING CULTURE

1 Overstatement of the importance of culture:

- humans are perceived as being prisoners of patterns of behaviour, beliefs and values, no successful interaction with other cultures is possible

2 Understatement of the importance of culture:

- culture is the arts and high literature, it has no impact on daily life, conflicts between different cultural groups derives only from economic, political or individual differences

■

KEY ASPECTS TO TEACHING CULTURE

- Culture is inseparable from language
- Culture is part of everyday life/ everyday language
- Culture in everyday language is not easily observable
- Culture is complex and dynamic
- Culture is not fixed and homogenous
- Culture is not teachable as a series of facts
- Humans are shaped by culture and language
- Humans can step out of their first culture and language
- Successful inter-cultural interaction/relationships are possible

■

Lo Bianco, J. (1999) *Sinhala and Tamil: Languages of Sri Lanka.* Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

THREE LAYERS OF CULTURE IN EVERYDAY SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- **The archaic culture**
- **The residual culture**
- **The emergent culture**

CONTINUED ▶

The archaic culture

- connects people to the patterns of the past
- is observable in sayings, proverbs and popular wisdom
- continues into the present

The residual culture

- is the lived and current patterns of behaviour in daily life
- it encompasses all expression of culture from 'ways of life'
- to the arts and literature

The emergent culture

- is the making of culture in the moment
- draws from archaic and residual cultural patterns
- but also tranforms them

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LANGUAGE TEACHERS NEED TO STUDY LANGUAGE/CULTURE AS BOTH OBJECT AND SUBJECT OF COMMUNICATION

Language/Culture as object

Language teachers need to have a knowledge of 'structural linguistics': phonology, morphology, syntax/semantics, lexicon and their interface vis-à-vis rule formation and production within a system of interrelated, dynamic, pragmatic, communicative networking; a system, that is, which considers language use in social contexts and culture in grammar. The study of the language/culture nexus as object requires a self-and other-reflected understanding of how 'metalanguage' informs human perceptions of the reciprocal nature of the linguistic system.

CONTINUED ▶

Language/Culture as subject

As subject a language/culture system is constantly activated, renewed and expanded by the users of the system without involving self-reflection.

■

SUCCESSFUL INTERCULTURAL INTERACTION REQUIRES EMPATHY

- Empathy is not an automatic outcome of language and culture education
- Formal education can promote empathy through direct teaching of its features
- Two steps are essential in teaching empathy:
  a identify and recognise distinctions
  b integrate these distinctions into a larger whole

Empathy can break down when there is:

- Too much emphasis on unity (assimilation pressures result)
- Too much emphasis on differences (separation pressures result)
- There are rapid or severe swings between too much unity and too much difference

■

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AIM OF INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE TEACHING

The ultimate goal of Intercultural Language Teaching is to help learners transcend their monocultural view of the world through the learning of a foreign language.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

THREE STEPS OF INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE TEACHING

- **Learning about cultures**
- **Comparing cultures**
- **Intercultural exploration**

CONTINUED ▶

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

Learning about cultures:

It has been a commonly held belief that the best way to learn about a foreign culture was to be "exposed" to it. No evidence so far has shown that study abroad leads to a better knowledge of a culture or improved cross-cultural understanding. The emerging consensus now is that culture is not learnt by osmosis, it requires an intellectual effort because culture is not readily accessible to be noticed, analysed and taught. Culture is embedded in language as an intangible, all-pervasive and highly variable force. How then are we to capture it in order to teach it?

We suggest that the macro levels of culture (ie: archaic, residual and eminent) in language use can be broken down into more specific features which show points of articulation between language and culture directly convertible into teachable material.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

Culture
Language

culture in context → World knowledge

culture in general structure of text → spoken/written genres

culture within shorter units of text → pragmatic norms norms

culture in organisation of units of text → norms of interaction

culture in linguistic structures/words/syntax/non-verbal → grammar/lexicon kinesics/prosody pronunciation

Language

Points of articulation between culture and language

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place*. Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

Learning about Cultures

World knowledge in a foreign culture corresponds to what has been meant traditionally by "teaching culture". It encompasses the teaching of the general cultural traits and ways of life of a society, including literature, critical literacy, history, geography, institutions and the arts. This "cultural" world knowledge is closer to culture than to language *per se*.

Culture in spoken and written genres is embedded in the general structure of text. For example culture is found in the way official or intimate letters are written in different countries, the type of information which ought to come first and last, what is acceptable content, etc. A speech, (as a genre of oral text), also reflects culture in the way it has been structured.

CONTINUED ▶

Learning about Cultures

Pragmatic and interactional norms refer to the way culture is manifested in spoken and written language. In pragmatic norms, culture is visible in shorter units of texts such as speech acts (eg. ***thanking*** in Japanese differs from ***thanking*** in Anglo-Australian). Interactional norms refer more to the way units of speech such as openings or closings in a conversation are organised.

In grammar, lexicon, kinesics, prosody and pronunciation, culture is also present interwoven into linguistic structures, words, syntax and non-verbal language.

Learning about culture and how culture links up with language as we have shown is a complex task and require language teachers to rethink the content of their subject matter.

■

Comparing cultures

Intercultural Language Teaching implies that language teaching is no longer exclusively teaching about another language-culture, it is also teaching language learners about their native language-culture by contrasting it to the target language-culture. Intercultural Language Teaching expands the traditional boundaries of language teaching by positioning language learning as a dual endeavour whereby learners not only learn the invisible cultural features of a foreign language but they also learn how to distance themselves from their native language/ culture environment to see it for the first time as what it really is, as just one possible world view and not the ***only*** world view.

CONTINUED ▶

Comparing cultures

Intercultural Language Teaching seen in this light has the genuine potential to help create harmony in a multicultural society such as Australia as it induces language learners to recognise their own ethnicity and to appreciate that it is a valid but ultimately an arbitrary construct, one of many. Our native culture ***naturalises*** the world. We presume that the world is the way our culture predisposes us to see it. However, Intercultural Language Teaching as an approach to the study of other languages makes culture visible - rather than the invisible pattern our own language tells us its is. Intercultural Language Teaching also emphasizes that everyone has an ethnicity which is to be valued and that ethnicity is not limited to those outside the dominant culture. Everybody has an ***ethnic*** background.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

Intercultural exploration

The third dimension of Intercultural Language Teaching is the least explicitly discussed in the current professional discourse of language teaching and this is not surprising. Intercultural competence is now a wide ranging concept which encompasses all the strategies and approaches any given person might use to shift from a monocultural to a more multicultural view of any subject matter.

Intercultural competence is more than learning ***about*** cultures and contrasting cultures. These are best thought of as the first two preparatory steps leading to intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is the ability to create for oneself a comfortable ***third*** place between one's first language-culture and the target language-culture. Intercultural competence is not in this sense learning how to parrot foreign cultural codes in order to interact seemingly successfully with foreigners.

CONTINUED ▶

Intercultural exploration

In fact people who interact with non-native speakers do not normally expect the non-native speakers to be exactly like native speakers, however native speakers do expect recognition of differences in the first instance and then negotiation of these differences which allow both parties to be comfortable. Hence negotiation of differences is a personal and inter-personal creative process which cannot be controlled by external forces. For this reason it cannot be "taught" by a language teacher. This is why the ACTFL has rightly identified intercultural ***exploration*** (and not learning) as one of the three goals of Intercultural Language Teaching. The role of language teachers for this third dimension of language learning is more of a supportive one in which they can help language learners articulate and resolve the conflicts they (the learners) will encounter in trying to reconcile the sometimes opposite values between their native and target languages/cultures. This self-reflectivity is necessary to create 'a coherent set of meanings from conflicting sources of reality'.

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Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

Intercultural exploration

Studies of "contact situations" (communication between native speakers and non-speakers) are relevant here for the understanding of the "intercultural linguistic space". Neustpuny (1982, 1988 & 1995) for example argues that sociocultural norms between native speakers and non-native speakers represent two distinct sets of norms (ie: native norms and intercultural norms) and that language learners need to be made aware of this difference. We believe language teachers can benefit from research which identifies differences of cultural norms between native communications and intercultural communications however we maintain that the "intercultural linguistic space" is by nature a "negotiation zone" where native and non-native speakers create interculturality largely as a interpersonal process.

CONTINUED ▶

Intercultural exploration

More enquiries into what happens in the "intercultural space" are however needed. As part of their professional development language teachers and cross-cultural trainers need to follow this new field of applied linguistic research as it is directly relevant to language teaching/learning practice.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

MAIN FEATURES OF INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH.

The following table shows the main features of Intercultural Language Teaching:

1. Culture is not acquired through osmosis. It must be taught explicitly.
2. The bilingual / multilingual speaker is the norm.
3. Conceptual and experiential learning is required to acquire intercultural competence.
4. Roles of teachers and learners are redefined.
5. New approaches to language testing are needed to assess intercultural competence.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

1 Culture is not acquired through osmosis. It must be taught explicitly.

This principle has enormous implications for language teachers. Teachers will have to learn to depict "the cultural factor" in all spoken and written forms of language before they can teach it. They will have to be able to do so in their native language-culture as well as the language-culture they aim to teach since Intercultural Language Teaching implies the comparison of cultures. This crucial aspect of Intercultural Language Teaching becomes even more complex if we consider that the language classroom is becoming more and more a ***multicultural*** rather than just a ***bicultural*** context. A language learner of Japanese in Australia is no longer necessarily a monolingual speaker of English but might have another language like Arabic as their mother tongue.

CONTINUED ▶

The issue in this case (from the language teacher's point of view) would be to help this language learner recognise "the cultural factor" in the three languages the learner is using or with which they have some familiarity. This emphasizes the need for teachers to identify culture as an explorative process they can undertake with learners rather than having to solely rely on research in cross-cultural discourse. No research could cater for all possible cross-cultural combinations teachers will encounter in the now more and more common multicultural language classroom. Teachers who wish to implement Intercultural Language Teaching need to study what culture in language use means and how to go about finding it.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

2 The bilingual / multilingual speaker is the norm.

This second principle of the Intercultural Language Teaching pedagogy entails two issues. Firstly, in Intercultural Language Teaching the ***bilingual or multilingual speaker*** is the goal to aim for since only this is what a language learner can be or become. This represents a shift from previous language teaching approaches which have tended to see erroneously the ***native speaker*** as the norm to aim for. It also implies that if language learners are going to practice being bilingual (or multilingual) then learners' other language(s) (first or second) need to be allowed into the language classroom.

CONTINUED ▶

Learning a language necessarily implies ***learning about languages*** and what they hold in common, as well as about the ways in which they are the expression of specific cultures. It is in this sense that applied Intercultural Language Teaching has the potential to help learners adopt a more multicultural view of the world through the practice of multiculturalism in what can now be truly called the ***language*** classroom, the class in which one learns about language and its links to culture. Vigilance is required from language teachers to ensure that the need to learn about language(s) is balanced with the need to learn the target language.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

3 Conceptual and experiential learning is required to acquire intercultural competence.

Firstly, since Intercultural Language Teaching implies learning about languages and cultures (or language-cultures), new concepts (metaknowledge) about the mechanics of human communication need to be introduced to learners using a new metalanguage which enables both teachers and learners to talk about language and culture. This might include for instance teaching learners the meaning of ***genres, registers, pragmatic norms*** etc.

It would also include introducing (or re-introducing) grammatical metaknowledge such as ***noun, pronoun, moods*** and ***tenses*** since Intercultural Language Teaching focusses on both the cultural and linguistic factors in language use.

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Secondly apart from more strictly conceptual learning Intercultural Language Teaching requires learners to experience extensively and intensively the target language-culture since it is only through the regulating effect of experience that new concepts can be fully acquired. In an Intercultural Language Teaching approach this means that language teachers need to provide ample tasks in the classroom where learners can be exposed to the target language and be allowed to use it in creative ways. Experiential language learning also implies that not only cognition but also feelings be recognised in Intercultural Language Teaching as both playing a role in the acquisition of intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence involves the whole person. It makes learning a foreign language more than learning skills as it involves a lot of self-reflection where both thoughts and feelings play a part in negotiating meaningful resolution between potential linguacultural clashes.

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place*. Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

4 Roles of teachers and learners are redefined.

A successful implementation of Intercultural Language Teaching requires teachers to become not only learners of language but also "learners of culture". As Intercultural Language Teaching also involves self-reflection (ie. learning about one's own culture) the best classroom environment is one which favours a learner-centred approach which does not however undermine the learner's need to be taught about culture in language use. In other words, learners need to be given the space to explore the target language-culture and at the same time they need to be taught about the "cultural factor" in the target language by well informed teachers.

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Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

5 New approaches to language testing are needed to assess intercultural competence.

The assessment of intercultural competence has not yet entered the realm of language testing. When it does it is bound to transform radically the very way we have conceived the goals of language teaching and learning. The main challenge will be to stop thinking of language learning in terms of the acquisition of skills only and to shift to a more holistic and dynamic view of language education which is both product and process oriented.

■

Crozet, C and Liddicoat, A. J (1999) "The Challenge of Intercultural Language Teaching: Engaging with Culture in the Classroom". In Lo Bianco, J., Liddicoat, A. J. and Crozet, C. (eds). *Striving for the Third Place.* Language Australia. Melbourne (p.113-125).

TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE USE OF NATURALLY OCCURRING TARGET LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENTS

Naturalistic immersion opportunities

Language students need ample and regular opportunities to encounter the language in naturalistic settings. In popular parlance this allows them to 'pick up' the language. It is important for young learners to interact with age peers who are native speakers of the target language or who are at least confident users. This encourages the learner to acquire the norms which are appropriate to his/her age but often also aids motivation and incentive to learn.

■

Lo Bianco, J. (1995) *Consolidating Gains – Recovering Ground A Review of Languages Other Than English in South Australian Schools.* Report to Minister for Education and Children's Services. NLLIA, Canberra.

TIPS

Domain opportunity

A domain is a social space, or area, in which a particular language is used and expected to be used. Not all such domains are 'open' or available to learners. The expression Domain Opportunity as used here refers to the relative openness of particular domains where the target language is used naturalistically. It is often assumed unproblematically that a learning opportunity exists where there is a community of speakers of the target language. For complex reasons of both closure to outsiders and of the tendency of native speakers to modify their normal speech to accommodate outsiders, the proximity of cultures of speakers of target languages does not automatically translate into opportunities for use and openness of domain. Where such domains are available they can be used creatively for learning. Bilingual classrooms can be very powerful domains for 'schooled' versions of the target language. ■

Lo Bianco, J. (1995) *Consolidating Gains – Recovering Ground A Review of Languages Other Than English in South Australian Schools.* Report to Minister for Education and Children's Services. NLLIA, Canberra.

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

1 Languages are learned mainly through imitation

Language learning does not happen solely through imitation. Language learners create their own system of rules through the development of hypotheses about how language works.

2 Parents usually correct young children when they make grammatical errors

Parents tend to correct their children only when it interferes with communication.

CONTINUED ▶

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

3 People with a high IQ are good language learners

learners with high IQ tend to do better than other learners in classroom settings when the focus is on the learning of forms (grammar). In a classroom where emphasis is placed on interactive language learning they do not do better than any other learners.

4 The most important factor in second language acquisition success is motivation

The more one succeeds, the greater one's motivation; the greater one's motivation, the more one succeeds. Why and how one succeeds however depends on language learning aptitudes which are widely different from one individual to another.

CONTINUED ▶

(Lightbown, P & Spada, N (1993) *How Languages are Learned*, Oxford University Press).

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

5 The earlier a second language is introduced in school programs, the greater the likelihood of success in learning

The decision about when to introduce second language instruction must depend on the objectives of the language program in the particular social context of the school. When the objective is native-like or near native-like performance in the second language, then it is desirable to begin exposure to the language as early as possible.

In the case of children from minority language backgrounds or homes where language, literacy and education are not well-developed, an early emphasis on the second language (the language of the majority) may lead to academic and personal problems. For these children, programs promoting the development of the first language at home and at school may be necessary.

CONTINUED ▶

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

When the objective is basic communicative ability for all students, in a context where there is a strong commitment to maintaining and developing the child's native language, it may be more efficient to be in second language teaching later. Older children are able to catch up very quickly on those who began earlier.

Any school program should be based on realistic estimates of how long it takes to learn a second language. One or two hours a week - even for seven or eight years - will not produce very advanced second language speakers.

CONTINUED ▶

(Lightbown, P & Spada, N (1993) *How Languages are Learned*, Oxford University Press).

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

6 Most of the mistakes which second language learners make are due to interference from their first language

The transfer of patterns from the native language is one cause of errors but more significant is overgeneralization of the target language rules.

7 Teachers should present grammatical rules one at a time, and learners should practise examples of each one before going on to another

Language learning is not linear in its development. Language development is not just adding rule after rule but integrating new rules into the existing system of rules, re-adjusting and restructuring until all the pieces fit.

CONTINUED ▶

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

8 Teachers should teach simple language structures before complex ones

No matter how a language is presented to learners, certain structures are acquired before others. This suggests that it is neither necessary nor desirable to restrict learners' exposure to certain linguistic structures which are perceived by a linguist as being 'simple'.

9 Learners' errors should be corrected as soon as they are made in order to prevent the formation of bad habits

Errors are a natural part of language learning. They show the patterns of learners' developing interlanguage systems. Only when errors are persistent do teachers need to bring the problem to the learner's attention.

CONTINUED ▶

(Lightbown, P & Spada, N (1993) *How Languages are Learned*, Oxford University Press).

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

10 Teachers should use materials that expose students only to language structures which they have already been taught

When a particular point is introduced for the first time or when the teacher feels there is a need for correction of a persistent problem, it is appropriate to use narrow-focus materials which isolate one element in a context where other things seem easy. But it would be a disservice to students to use such materials exclusively or even predominantly.

11 When learners are allowed to interact freely, they learn each others' mistakes

Research has shown that second language learners do not produce any more errors in their speech when talking to learners at similar levels of proficiency than they do when speaking to learners at more advanced levels or to native speakers.

CONTINUED ■

(Lightbown, P & Spada, N (1993) *How Languages are Learned*, Oxford University Press).

LANGUAGE LEARNING: FACTS & OPINIONS

12 Students learn what they are taught

Learners learn better when the material presented to them suits their current stage of language development. Learners also learn a great deal that no one ever teaches them. They are able to use their own internal learning mechanisms to discover many of the complex rules and relationships which underlie the language they wish to learn. Students may be said in this sense to learn much more than they are taught.

(Lightbown, P & Spada, N (1993) *How Languages are Learned,* Oxford University Press).

FOSTERING AN ARTICULATE, LITERATE AND MULTICULTURAL NATIO

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